

CINEFANTASTIQUE

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SCHWARZENEGGER TERMINATOR 2

PREVIEW THE SUMMER HIT, PLUS MAKING "TOTAL RECALL"

HIGHLANDER 2

Sean Connery returns for futuristic action effects

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II

They're back, but are they as green at the boxoffice?

Volume 21 Number 5



41782

COWABUNGA!



N E X T I N C I N E F A N T A S T I Q U E

Filming "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II"

Those rowdy reptiles that took the 1990 boxoffice by storm when launching the resonant battle cry—"COW-ABUNGA"—will be returning this spring to once more face-off against their old nemesis, Shredder; and CINEFANTASTIQUE's June issue (available March 22) takes you behind-the-scenes for the filming of this

Inside Jim Henson's Creature Shop.



much anticipated sequel—TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II.

Get Your Turtles Issue FREE!!

Our writer details the elaborate North Carolina filming that encompassed four enormous sound-stages, upon which were constructed elaborate sets like a massive and realistic pier and the huge junkyard which serves as Shredder's home base (complete with tons of sand and hundreds of props and set pieces).

Explaining how these and other amazing feats were accomplished are produc-

tion designer Roy Forge Smith and art director Mayne Burke (GRAVEYARD SHIFT). Additionally, William Plant, supervisor of Jim Henson's Creature Shop, unravels the animatronic mystery of the turtles themselves—you'll get to know those pulling the strings of remote control puppetry for the turtles' eyes, mouths, and other facial features, along with those responsible for the turtle suits (costumers, painters, etc.)

And, rounding-out this comprehensive coverage are interviews with other key players including director Michael Pressman, and creators Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird.



Filming the turtle animatronics.

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The magazine with a "Sense of Wonder."

APRIL, 1991

Schwarzenegger. The name is magic at the boxoffice. Director John Milius transformed Schwarzenegger from a body builder with personality into a credible actor in CONAN, THE BARBARIAN (1982). Director James Cameron made Schwarzenegger a sensation with the smash success of his low-budget gem, THE TERMINATOR (1984). Schwarzenegger has parlayed that success through a savvy choice of roles that have expanded his career and made him a bona fide star. With an unbroken string of boxoffice hits at the movies, Schwarzenegger is now among the most powerful players in the movie industry. His boxoffice muscle gives him the power to make virtually any film project of his choosing a reality. And just as frequently as not, the projects of Schwarzenegger's choosing are fantasy and science fiction, making him, in effect, an auteur of the genre.

This issue's cover stories are devoted to Schwarzenegger's most recent forays into *cinefantastique*, a preview of the currently filming TERMINATOR 2, set to blitz theatres July 4, and a look behind-the-scenes at the making of Schwarzenegger's boxoffice hit last summer, TOTAL RECALL. Our scoop on TERMINATOR 2 is sure to disappoint some fans. Just picture Schwarzenegger's unstoppable Terminator as a nice guy who's out to protect rather than kill remorselessly. Schwarzenegger isn't above using his Terminator image, which he recently played for laughs in the hugely successful KINDERGARTEN COP. But Schwarzenegger, now a family man, having married into the Kennedy clan, with an appointment to the President's Council on Physical Fitness, apparently can now only see himself in terms of a hero. In TERMINATOR 2, Cameron's metaphor for the Nazi holocaust in which machines systematically exterminate mankind, it seems Schwarzenegger couldn't allow himself to be an instrument for the wrong side, despite the acclaim garnered by the chilling effect of his uniquely inimitable performance in the original.

Schwarzenegger may be calling the shots, but if you ask me, he's lost his edge.

Frederick S. Clarke



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TEENAGE MUTANT

The comic book blockbusters strike back,

By Gary L. Wood

As the Ninja Turtles once again battle the forces of The Foot, filming within the secretive walls of Carolco's large North Carolina movie studio, a stronger debate rages across the country, a debate that only the release of *THE TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II* on March 23 will solve. Will the Turtles be the next Mickey Mouse or hit the list of by-gone fads along with Transformers, Holly Hobby, and the Pet Rock?

Though many experts are already reporting the death of the Turtles, New Line Cinema and Golden Harvest Films are gambling \$20 million that the Turtles are here to stay. Though there are some changes, the "Heroes on the Half Shell" are back to battle that unstoppable Shredder. Not back are producer Simon Fields and director Steve Barron, who are suing Golden Harvest for their share of the profits of the first film. Directing the sequel is Michael Pressman, who has worked exclusively in television since directing *DOCTOR DETROIT* for Universal in 1983.

It is obvious that the question of how much longer the Turtles can retain their popularity in American Pop Culture is an important concern for the filmmakers, a fact evident by the speed with which the sequel is being produced and released—less than twelve months after the first film became a surprise hit at the boxoffice.

But sales at toy stores across the country seem to indicate that the Turtles are not showing any signs of age. The merchandising includes action figures, cereal, cookies, pajamas, toothbrushes, underwear, skateboards, place mats, sheets, shampoo, key chains, lunch boxes, and watches. Mark Freedman, president of Surge Licensing in Jericho, New York, the Turtles' licensing agent, estimated that the retail sales of Turtles merchandise would reach \$1 billion worldwide by the end of 1990. A nationwide concert tour featuring a Turtles rock band is doing slack business, however.

"The longevity has surprised me," said Todd Langen, who wrote the first film and scripted the sequel as well. "In fact, when I first started doing the sequel, I was going,



Attaching the animatronic, radio-controlled head of Turtle leader Leonardo for the sequel during filming last October at the Carolco Studios in Wilmington, North Carolina.

'Jeez, I wonder if this phenomena will last into next year.' It looks like it's going to last pretty easily."

Perhaps with Langen, who used to write for television's *THE WONDER YEARS*, guiding the Turtles, they will have more substance than the fads that have gone before. "I like the Turtles," said Langen. "I've written some very character-oriented things. In a way, you have four different characters who are really one character with four distinct personalities you can play around with. You have the jokester, you have the wit, and the leader, and the shy gadget wiz. It's fun to use that when writing their dialogue and putting them in

situations."

The main situation that the Turtles will be involved in this time involves that mysterious radioactive "goo" that gave them their mutated forms and intelligence in the first place. Yes, the Turtles are searching for their roots. The "ooze" turns up in the wrong hands. Shredder, fresh from his tangle with a trash compactor, happens upon the "ooze" and, with the help of Professor Jordan Perry (David Warner of *STAR TREK V* and *TIME BANDITS*) mutates a snapping turtle and a wolverine to do battle with the Ninja Turtles. In the end, though, it is Shredder who realizes that to get a job done right you must do it yourself. Shredder mutates himself into Super Shredder and sets about to destroy himself and the Ninja Turtles.

Langen said he had to honor New Line's wishes to keep the new mutants a secret. "The villains are related to the dark side of the 'ooze,'" was all that he could reveal.

Of course any trip to the Turtles' past meant consultation with comic book creators Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird, whose Massachusetts-based Mirage Studios publishing house has grown rich on the Turtles phenomenon. The two Turtle masters had story approval on both films. Producer David Chan clarified that point. "They approve a treatment and then the screenplay has to conform substantially to the treatment," he said.

Noted Langen of the sequel's story concept, "It was sort of my idea, although we—the producers and I, and then also Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird—discussed this together in the initial formulation stages of the story. I just thought it provided a good [springboard]. It seemed like a good way to continue the story and talk a little bit more about where the Turtles come from, and how that could drive a plot in their present day lives."

Langen said he enjoyed working with Turtles' creators Eastman and Laird. "They could have been really, really hard-nosed about certain things," said Langen. "I was surprised they weren't. Often you have to realize that screenplays are different than comic book stories, and they are different from television stories, too. It was good because they knew when to listen

NINJA TURTLES II

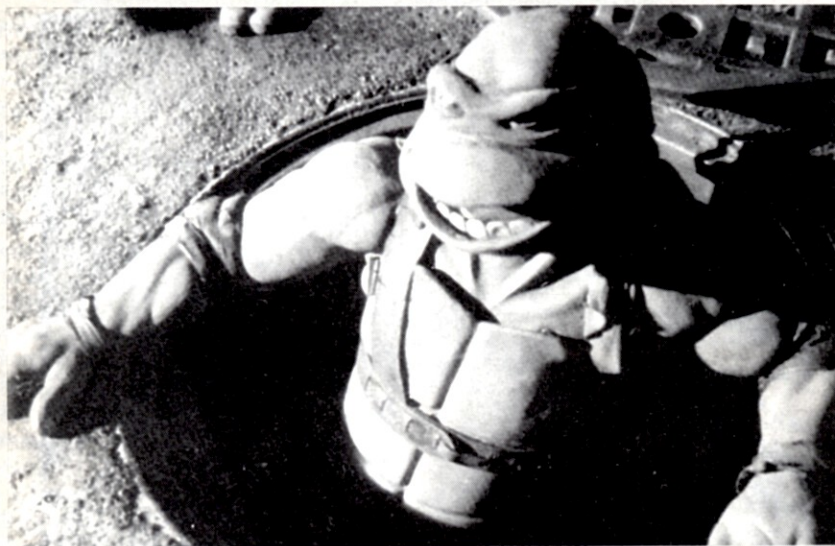
but are they still as green at the boxoffice?

and when to contribute, and they actually contributed quite a bit. In fact, some of the specific beats of the movie could be directly attributed to their suggestions."

In fact, there were early discussions involving storylines that would tie the "ooze" into an environmental statement. Another storyline hoped to integrate a message on education due to the truants present in the first film and the sequel. "You sacrifice in order to make the plot clear," said Langen about abandoning such ideas. "To drive the plot, you sacrifice a lot of the character stuff, and there just was not room to include all that."

A new character added to the sequel is Keno, a pizza delivery boy who discovers the Turtles living in April's apartment. To make matters more interesting, Keno is played by young martial arts expert Ernie Reyes Jr. of television's *SIDEKICKS*, who was buried beneath a Turtle suit in the first film, acting as a stunt double for Donatello. While watching Reyes in action beneath the suit, Langen noted, "It was interesting because you could tell, just by looking at the moves, who was good and who was not. When Donatello was making moves, you could tell it was just a little bit crisper. But Ernie's also a pretty good actor."

Puppeteering the Turtles for the sequel, operating the hand controls that give the costumes their expressiveness, while watching the action on video.



The Turtles re-emerge in their sequel March 22, less than a year since their surprise movie hit.

After Michelangelo, the actor inside Michaelangelo, scored a walk-on as a Domino's delivery "dude" in the first film, actor Josh Pais (alias: Raphael) swore that next time "my mug is going to be up there." Whether we will get to see the true Pais is still uncertain, but it is a good bet that his on-screen time will not equal that of Reyes.

"It turned out that Ernie was just about the perfect age," said Langen of the former Turtle performer's casting as Keno. "It was a character that would be involved with the Turtles, unlike the Danny character in the first movie, who was sort of on the wrong side of the law. He really did not get involved with the Turtles until the end of the movie. Keno is a character that lives with the Turtles and actually *fights* with the Turtles. One of the great things about Reyes is that he actually has martial arts in his background."

The character of Casey Jones, neatly played by Elias Koteas in the first film, has disappeared to make room for Keno. "It's sort of like his character is on vacation," said Langen. "I like Casey. I enjoyed writing his character last year. He's the kind of guy who can say just about anything. But it turns out that because of the amount of story, and the amount of characters we were juggling in this film, if we were to include Casey's character we would also have to deal with Casey and April's romantic relationship—stuff like that. We would have ended up with a two and a half-hour

movie, and that we could not do. So we decided to put Casey on vacation. He's in Bermuda, or something like that."

Langen noted the trade-off of Keno for Casey was important in that "Keno is a character that the kids in the audience can live vicariously through with the Turtles." Langen said Keno ends up butting heads with Raphael initially. "The thing about Keno is that he has got a little bit of an attitude problem—just like Raphael in some ways," said Langen. "Of course, he and Raphael don't hit it off

right away because of that. One of the things that happens is that Keno has to learn a little bit of an attitude adjustment. That's something that the Turtles and Splinter provide for him in the movie. They sort of have to temper his character a bit."

Many were surprised that Raphael seemed to be the star Turtle of the first film. Though not the leader, Raphael dominated the screen time. Noted Langen, "The reason is that Raphael goes against the grain. He's much more complex. You can work with his character because he is dissatisfied with *everything* . The way I describe him is 'Mr. Intensity with a New York accent.'"

The introduction of Keno and his relationship to Raphael allows the angry Turtle to shine again in the sequel. "He's the lead Turtle in this picture, too, although the Turtles are a little more balanced this time," said Langen. "You've got four Turtles to deal with, and you have to do something with each one."

All the Turtles, as well as the new villains, are showcased in the sequel's climactic fight which takes place in a nightclub. It was reported early on that the fight would begin amidst the rhyming and rhythm of a national "rap" recording artist, thus creating "Ninja Rap."

Langen dispelled that rumor. "The Turtles *do not* start rapping," he said. "I want to clear that up right away. What happens

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VALKENVANIA

Dan Aykroyd turns to directing with a comic

By Steve Biodrowski

Is VALKENVANIA a scary comedy or a funny thriller? With names like Dan Aykroyd, Chevy Chase, and John Candy attached to the project, audiences might expect a SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE/SC-TV-type genre spoof, the sort of thing Count Floyd would have shown on "Monster Chiller Horror Theatre." The filmmakers, however, tell us to expect not a parody but an adventure-comedy-monster movie which begins with a realistic premise and then proceeds, like a bizarre comic nightmare, straight into THE TWILIGHT ZONE.

Chase and Demi Moore (GHOST) play a New York yuppie couple who, during a trip along the East Coast, veer off the main road and find themselves pulled over for a minor traffic violation by the

The Valkenvania courthouse, designed by William Sandell, surrounded by the detritus of its victimized motorists.



Aykroyd poses on the junk-strewn location of Valkenvania, the Sargasso Sea of speed traps.

sheriff (Candy) of Valkenvania. Presiding over the small, isolated town is the 106-year old Justice of the Peace Valkenheiser (Aykroyd) who sentences violators to death for such infractions. Candy and Aykroyd also play double roles: Candy as a woman, Aykroyd as a five hundred-pound mutant baby. Aykroyd's makeup as both the centenarian and the giant baby is by David Miller, who employed techniques similar to those he developed on ANIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET V in order to get Aykroyd out of the makeup chair in little over an hour.

Production design for the many strange sights in Valkenvania is by William Sandell (TOTAL RECALL). Robert Weiss (AMAZON WOMEN ON THE MOON, AIRPLANE) produced the film, photographed by Dean Cundy (WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT), with Michael Lantieri (BACK TO THE FUTURE II and III, INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE) supervising on-set special effects. Aykroyd developed the script from

an idea by his brother, Peter, and made his directing debut after John Hughes and John Landis turned down offers to helm the project. Warner Bros delayed plans to rush the film out last Christmas, giving the neophyte director more time in November to shoot inserts and pick-ups for an anticipated February release.

"It's a story that everybody knows," said producer Weiss. "People in their car decide to get off the main road and take a short cut or a scenic route, and as they're rolling through a

Aykroyd poses with John Candy in drag (l) and leads Demi Moore and Chevy Chase, the hapless travelers stopped for speeding in a town where the penalty is death.



strange town they're pulled over for a minor traffic offense. This film takes that premise a step further. You know these situations, especially in very small towns, where you have to follow the cop back to the justice of the peace to settle your ticket? Our story is about a justice of the peace who's a little bit nuts. The original notion of the movie comes from a true story about a town where some people were detained, so it is reality—plus a little."

The idea of combining laughs and scares with gothic elements occurred to Aykroyd and Weiss after attending a screening of HELLRAISER. "where the audience was laughing, not at the calculated moments," according to Weiss. "So Dan and I talked about doing a movie, thinking, 'Wouldn't it be great if they were laughing where they were supposed to be?' Peter Aykroyd came up with the notion of this town and what happens, then collaborated with Dan on the story and fleshed out the script."

Before Warners gave the green light, several other studios passed on the project's weird combination of humor

IA

shock fest.

and horror. "It's tricky trying to describe it to somebody, because it's not parody or satire," said Weiss. "We hope that confusion will be cleared up right away in the movie. We like to think of it as a comedy that's so scary it's funny. What we are looking to do is create an E-ticket ride. The movie is a slide that starts off in upscale New York with Chase as a financial publisher and Moore as a lawyer; they go for a ride and take this left turn into Hell.

"I think you can be very unsuccessful trying to parody or satirize horror, because it's already so far out there," Weiss continued. "There are very few cases of it being done successfully. There are other films that I do, like *THE NAKED GUN* and its sequel, which I'm working on now, that are out-and-out genre parodies. We think one of the reasons that works well is that we are coming off very real archetypes and situations. If they're out there to begin with, it's hard to spin them around.

"Luckily, we had none of those problems because ours is an attempt to create a new world. There are things in this movie that people have not seen before, like the other character Dan plays, one of the

Moore, about to be sacrificed to "Misgrateline" by the mutants. After market tests, Warner Bros decided to change the film's title to *NOTHING BUT TROUBLE*.



Aykroyd (r) and John Daveikis play giant mutant babies—a result of the town's shallow gene pool—in makeup by David Miller.

infant mutants—there's a shallow gene pool! It's a good blend, and it's put together in a way where we hope the audience won't know what's going to happen next."

In keeping with this approach, Aykroyd insisted that the makeup and effects be convincing *a la* *GHOSTBUSTERS*, rather than comically cheap looking. "You can't do that, or you're hosing your audience," said Weiss. "You have a responsibility to your audience—you're asking for their entertainment dollar. Everything is in earnest; the jeopardy is real. If you're trying to create another world, you can't have staples and wires showing."

Creating that world actually required building the town of Valkenvania and its environs,

when a suitable location could not be found. "We went looking," said Weiss. "We found some interesting old mining towns, but even if the town was a little bit close, we found nothing like the Valkenvanian courthouse, which was supposed to be located near the biggest scrapyard in the Northeast. It's not just a scrapyard—the justice of the peace has collected things for a hundred years, so we had to create that illusion."

For Aykroyd, the biggest challenge of serving double-duty as both actor and director, was supervising the set while in makeup for his characters. "It was very arduous," said Weiss. "The hardest was when he was just wearing the mutant infant head. To put on the suit was a long process, and the head was applied first, so there were times when he was just in the head, directing. The body seemed like Dan—camouflaged shorts and a shirt—and he would have a giant foam head on. Then it was a little hard to take him seriously, but he managed to get his point across."

With principal photography wrapped late in September and a music score composed by Michael Kamen (*BRAZIL*), Aykroyd was no doubt grateful for the additional time to fine tune his debut directorial effort. The question remains

how to tell audiences that, even with Chevy Chase behind the wheel of a car bound on a long road trip, *VALKENVANIA* is not just another variation on *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VACATION*. "People are definitely going to be set up for a comedy," admitted Weiss. "What I hope the campaign tells them is that they're in for a wild, funny, scary rollercoaster ride." □

Aykroyd as town father and Justice of the Peace J. P. Valkenheiser, makeup prosthetics designed by David Miller.



HIGHLANDER 2

THE QUICKENING

Welcome to 2024, as rock video stylist Russell Mulcahy continues the epic saga.

By Alan Jones

Written by Peter Bellwood and co-producer William Panzer, *HIGHLANDER 2: THE QUICKENING* picks up the saga of immortal Conner MacLeod in the year 2024. Back are stars Christopher Lambert as MacLeod and Sean Connery as Ramirez, his wisecracking Spanish mentor. Also returning is former MTV director Russell Mulcahy, who made the original film in 1987 such a visual *tour de force*.

In the sequel, Earth is now protected by a laser-powered shield built by MacLeod after the ozone layer was destroyed in 1999.

Taken over by the sinister TSC corporation, the shield has become a key conservation issue with "Cobalt" terrorists who believe the atmosphere has repaired itself and, with the battle cry "Reach for the sky," launch constant sabotage attacks. This is the revolutionary subtropical world in which MacLeod is now a mortal.

But not for long, because the truth about his soon-to-be-re-gained immortality is revealed to him through strange flashback images of the Planet Zeist. From these visions, MacLeod learns the alien nature of his own origin, the real importance of the Gathering and the Prize, and the new destiny he must fulfill to save man-



Director Russell Mulcahy (l) poses on the set with Christopher Lambert, returning in the role of Connor MacLeod, the immortal 16th century Scottish warrior who cannot die.

kind from destruction. Co-starring is Michael Ironside as General Katana, ruling warlord of the Planet Zeist, and Virginia Madsen as rebel leader Louise Marcus. *HIGHLANDER 2: THE QUICKENING* is scheduled to make its world premiere in Paris on February 6th. No U.S. theatrical deal has been set, but the film's video rights have been pre-sold to RCA/Columbia for \$2 million.

Shot last year in Argentina on a grand scale, the \$22 million film boasts massive set constructions by production designer Roger Hall and the visual flash of Mulcahy, framed in action-packed Cinemascope. "It had to be all or nothing," said Mulcahy, about tackling

the sequel. "I went for a 150% improvement over the first film in hope I'd get 90%. I like *HIGHLANDER* a lot and I didn't want to destroy the ongoing qualities it still has. Someone else could have come along and fucked up the sequel. I didn't want that."

Mulcahy was exhausted on location from putting in eight-hour days to ensure the movie would finish on schedule last May 25th, exactly twelve weeks after it began shooting. "There was really no thought about doing a second film until a year after the first had opened and it looked destined to become a cult hit," said Mulcahy. "People either saw it six times or not at all. When

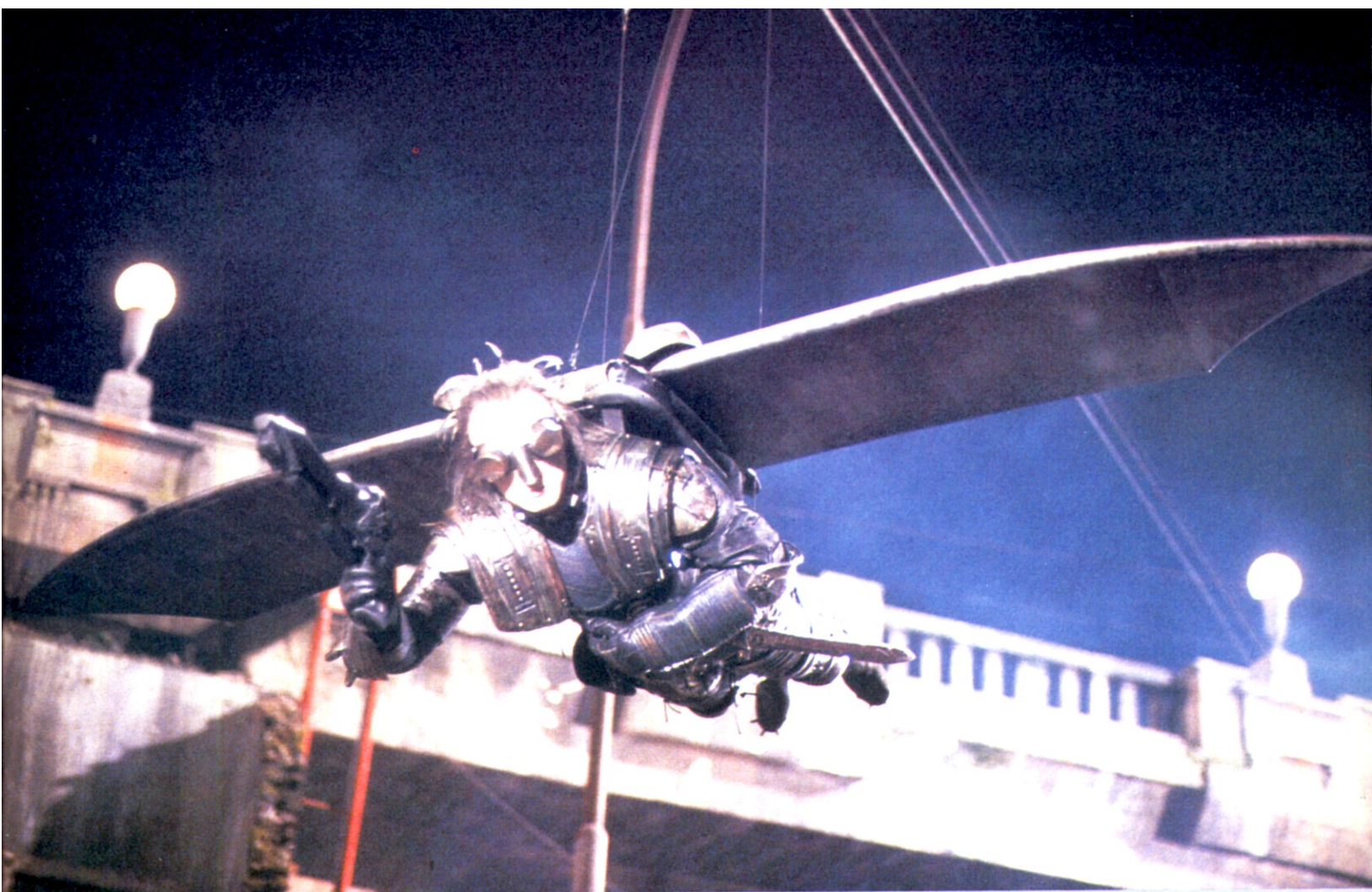
producers Panzer and Peter Davis approached Christopher and I, we said we'd only consider a sequel if the concept was better than the first and the production value higher." Mulcahy said the sequel met those criteria—*HIGHLANDER 2* is the biggest international movie ever based in Argentina.

"If anyone had problems with the first film—and let's face it, the whole of America seemed to—the second does clarify a lot of the questions raised," said Mulcahy. "What exactly the Prize was is all cleared up. That caused a lot of confusion the first time round.

But it works as a separate entity. You don't have to have seen *HIGHLANDER* to enjoy what we're making here."

Mulcahy's original plan in shooting the movie in Argentina was to incorporate all of the film's major sets into a vast *BATMAN*-styled city to have been built on the Buenos Aires dockside. Though it cost \$1.5 million to construct, covering 120,000 square feet, the scale of Mulcahy's vision had to be cut back when some \$2 million got lopped off the film's budget due to Argentina's skyrocketing inflation.

It was during the 1988 Cannes Film Festival when producers Panzer and Davis realized they had no option but to make a sequel. "Foreign distributors



A winged assassin from the Planet Zeist bears down on the Highlander, who joins in a pitched air battle on razor-edged hover-skis, wire work supervised by Bob Harmon.

kept approaching us saying HIGHLANDER had been so successful in their territory, could we make another one," said Panzer. "HIGHLANDER had been an enormous hit in France—it was one of the decade's top moneymakers there—Great Britain and Germany. Where it didn't do well theatrically, it became a sizeable title on video, so a sequel seemed quite viable financially. Everybody loved the way Russell handled HIGH-

LANDER—people still talk about the aquarium dissolve [linking device]. Most directors won't even consider doing a sequel so it was marvelous when he committed himself to the project."

The producers were contractually obliged to offer the sequel first to Greg Widen, HIGHLANDER's original screenplay writer. He turned it down as did his too busy co-scripters Larry Ferguson and Peter Bellwood. "We had story

ideas but nothing more than broadstrokes," said Panzer. "We wanted Ramirez back. We knew it would take place in the future, a notion springing from our shared vision of domed cities and polluted atmospheres. But we received a number of drafts from writers with a distinct lack of focus."

Alternatively titled HIGHLANDER 2: YELLOWKNIFE—the name of a mythical Canadian frontier town—and HIGHLANDER 2020, the first five script drafts were disasters according to both Mulcahy and Lambert. "A variety of bizarre storylines were presented from right, left, and center, and each one was worse than the last," recalled Mulcahy. "ENEMY MINE's Ed Khmara turned in something ignoring the basics of the first film. One was a science fiction western shoot-em-up. None had the remotest sense of heroic romance I felt set HIGHLANDER apart. I tried to keep enthusiastic as I read each successive new script. I love the

MacLeod character and the basic immoral concept. That's why I made the original. Each draft was more boring than the last and I vividly remember reading this line in one: 'Two bad guys fight MacLeod in a railway yard.' Dull, or what? I didn't want a film of mine looking like any other cheap action movie."

Noted Lambert, the Highlander himself, "The early

The luminous Virginia Madsen as environmental rebel leader Louise Marcus, the Highlander's new love.



Michael Ironside as Zeist General Katana, outfitted for evil in a leather costume by Deborah Everton, pursues the Highlander on board a crowded subway train.



HIGHLANDER 2 THE QUICKENING

SEAN CONNERY'S SUPERSTAR CLOUT

Connery commanded a cool \$3 million for just two weeks work in Buenos Aires.

By Alan Jones

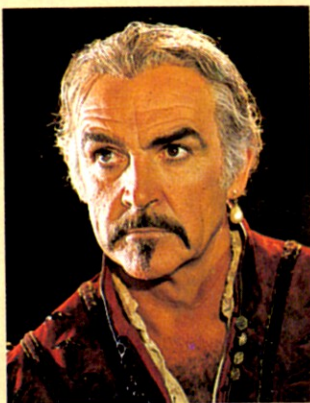
"No unauthorized person to proceed beyond this point. Persons disobeying this directive risk arrest and termination."

MAX Control

This warning notice-board, part of the dressing for a huge futuristic prison set in *HIGHLANDER 2: THE QUICKENING*, ironically said it all. Sean Connery was acting. And any casual visitors in his eyeline were as unwelcome and indigestible to the aging superstar as the endless diet of ham and cheese sandwiches the Argentinians seem to exist on.

Connery arrived in Buenos Aires on May 7, 1990, to begin a two-week stint reprising the role of Juan Villa-Lobos Ramirez, wise-cracking mentor to Christopher Lambert's Connor MacLeod. Although joined by cast members Michael Ironside, Virginia Madsen, John McGinley and Allan Rich, Connery was the most important part of the *HIGHLANDER 2* equation, the integral reason why a "Dirty Dozen" crew of British, American and local technicians had awkwardly meshed together under the watchful eye of returning Australian director Russell Mulcahy. Some, like special effects supervisor John Richardson, had patiently waited thirty weeks for Connery to finally sign his contract to get started on the sequel to the European boxoffice blockbuster.

Connery's \$3 million contract stipulated twelve hours on and twelve hours off in keeping with Argentine Film Industry regulations. Since the



Connery's cameo in the first film.

two-hour drive to the film's location and back would be expensive time wasted, a helicopter was put at Connery's disposal. "To satisfy our pre-sold foreign distributors, we promised Connery would appear in a third of the completed film against his eighteen minutes in *HIGHLANDER*," said co-producer David Panzer. "Maximizing his valuable time was important for this reason." Connery's screen time was increased

further by clever use of veteran Connery double Rocky Taylor.

Connery actually ended up earning \$3½ million on the film when his establishing scene, a complicated Louma crane shot, returned from the laboratory with a scratch on the negative. As a result, the crew's day off on Sunday, May 20th was cancelled and the scene was reshot in just over two hours. The insurance company Gaebel, Watkins, and Taylor, Inc., who paid out heavily when Natalie Wood drowned during *BRAINSTORM*, footed

Connery and Lambert relax during filming of a blood-spattered *BONNIE & CLYDE* shoot-out in which the immortals are blasted by gunfire in a parking garage attack.



Connery as Ramirez walks through the film's desolate street set built on a Buenos Aires dockside location.

the bill for this vital shot according to Mulcahy. "When you have a costly star for a small period of time, it's unfair to shortchange the audience with master-shots, close-ups and obvious inserts," said Mulcahy. "I wanted it to look like he [Connery] had spent some quality time on the movie rather than us all rushing around just to get coverage."

According to Mulcahy, working with Connery was a lot more fun this time around. "He's in great spirits. The golf here must help because he says he's really enjoying working with me," said the director, still reeling from *THE UNTOUCHABLES* Oscar-winner agreeing to work an extra fifteen minutes for free to get a long speech in the can.

Lack of professionalism is one area Connery does not tolerate. Everybody was very nervous the day he arrived on the set for the first time. Costume designer Deborah Everton was so anxious to make a good impression she referred to Connery as "His Sean-ness." Said Connery, "There's nothing wrong with a little anxiety to keep people on their toes, but anybody who's professional has no problems with me." □

drafts had ludicrous dramatic twists because the writers didn't have a proper understanding of the dynamics motoring the first film," he said. "I didn't bang my fist on the table until I'd read the fifth. I was bored being disappointed all the time and I kept calling the producers to moan. I'm not for sequels in general, anyway, and I certainly wasn't going to make one just for the sake of it. Movies in the pure RAMBO tradition are great, but there must be necessary moments where two people look at each other and are human. I'm not that sort of butch-action-man anyway."

Then Brian Clemens entered the scenario and a year of script revisions with THE AVENGERS TV show writer added the all-important Planet Zeist explanations for MacLeod's immortality. "I thought this was a masterstroke," enthused Mulcahy. "So was starting the movie with MacLeod aged 75 years. For the first twenty minutes he's an old man forced to do battle while trying to catch his breath. I found this intriguing and exciting." Clemens' input, with further revisions by Panzer and a now available Bellwood, helped Mulcahy realize the full potential for HIGHLANDER 2, although Mulcahy's own detailed script contributions will go uncredited.

"HIGHLANDER had too much exposition explaining how and why," said Mulcahy. "For a lot of people the present and past time shifts became confusing and I didn't have much time to get a story going. With the characters established, now there's a chance to tell a very exciting, multi-angled story incorporating romance and slam-bang spectacle with a moral and ecological slant. Because this is set in the future—fantasy buffs don't seem to like a contemporary base—it's already streets ahead on an audience acceptance level. Here the plot is dictating my style rather than vice-versa. I can tell a story with quiet moments—honestly. Then when the action whacks in you have a more immediate contrast. Yes, the rock video wiz-kid has grown up and transformed into—David Lean!" □

STORYBOARDING COMIC BOOK EFFECTS

Aussie director Russell Mulcahy designed action to boost the sequel's fantasy quotient.

The spectacle Aussie director Russell Mulcahy promises to deliver in HIGHLANDER 2 includes air-to-air battles on hover-skis customized with steel razors, termed Flying Blades in the script, *outré* high-tech weaponry such as Disc Guns devised to decapitate Immortals quickly, and artillery that fires humanoid projectiles like bullets.

"All I can remember about HIGHLANDER is lots of guys in various eras bashing swords about," said Mulcahy. "That worked the first time, but HIGHLANDER 2 has to transcend that with more originality and the ability to turn unknown corners."

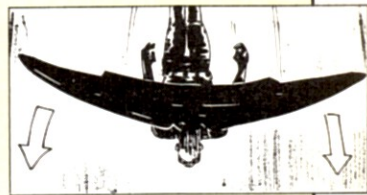
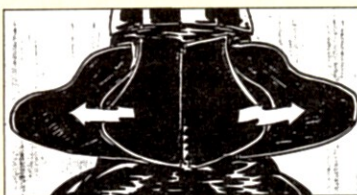
Mulcahy designed the film's action in London with special effects supervisor John Richardson, who has worked on many of the James Bond films, working with storyboard artists Mike Ploog and Brendan McCarthy.

"HIGHLANDER 2 is much more a comic strip along the lines of the Silver Surfer," said Mulcahy. "The Flying Blades and the villains' expandable metal wings come from THE WILD BOYS treatment I wrote four years ago. The producers are being very supportive despite the fact they don't understand quite what I'm doing. But like the first film, they are letting me get on with it even if they don't know how I'm going to put it all together."

Alan Jones



A planet Zeist assassin attacks, diving straight at the camera. An overhead angle back-projection shows how the assassin's wings unfold.



The speeding train on which the Highlander battles Zeist assassins crashes out of control as passengers on the inside are ripped from their seats.



The Highlander takes to a hover-board, heel clamped in place. The design was switched to hover-skis after BACK TO THE FUTURE 3.



UPWORLD

Will makeup artist-turned-director Stan Winston's gnome movie ever surface?

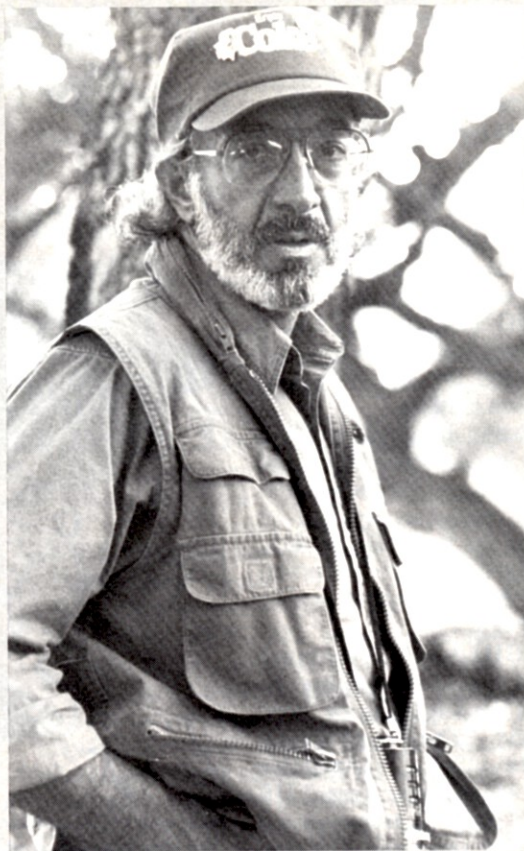
By Tim Vandehey

Welcome to the Academy Awards. "... and the winner for Best Actor in a starring role is ... Gnorm, for UPWORLD?" Applause, and the three-foot tall figure stylishly attired in a tree bark tuxedo tunnels his way to the podium through the plush carpet, grinning broadly and holding back tears. Fade out.

Fantasy? Certainly. Though King Kong got his special Oscar from the Academy in 1978, it appears that Gnorm, the animatronic star of makeup-expert-turned director Stan Winston's UPWORLD, may not even get his shot at the big award. Winston's UPWORLD, which began filming at the end of 1988, appears to be stuck on a shelf at bankrupt Vestron Pictures. The film's fate mirrors that of PUMPKINHEAD, Winston's directorial debut for DEG in 1987, which sat on the shelf for a year when that company went under.

Winston, who won an Oscar himself for the effects work he supervised on ALIENS, feels Gnorm (the "G" is *not* silent) is the first nonhuman actor to truly star in a motion picture. "He is the most extensively used non-human, not-of-this-world character to date in film," said Winston from his office in Van Nuys. "He carries as many scenes in the film as any other actor."

The "upworld" of the title, what gnomes call our world, is where Gnorm surfaces at the film's beginning. The screenplay by Pen Desham posits an underground society of gnomes who live in peace and harmony, with all their light and power derived from a stone called the lumin. Every decade or so, this lumin must be carried to the surface and exposed to the sun to recharge its batteries. This is normally done by warrior gnomes, who are the aristocracy of the underworld. However, Gnorm, who is just a lowly tunneler, decides to win over his would-be girlfriend by taking the lumin to the sur-



Director Stan Winston, whose effects film disappeared into a financial limbo after backer Vestron Pictures went belly-up.

face and becoming a hero.

Unfortunately, Gnorm's luck is as bad as his judgement. He breaks ground at night in the middle of Griffith Park—just in time to see a police bagman get blown to pieces by a killer's briefcase bomb, the result of a major botch-up by a detective played by Anthony Michael Hall. Gnorm loses the lumin in the blast and Hall is about to lose his job—until he finds that Gnorm witnessed the murder. So a very strange partnership is formed, with Hall helping Gnorm find the stone while Gnorm helps Hall track down the killer and save his career. What follows is a misfit buddy-cop story right out of LETHAL WEAPON—except that one

of the partners' is not human.

"We wanted to have a straightforward action movie," said Trilogy Entertainment supervising producer John Watson, "teaming up a cop and a gnome, like reluctant partners, with their lives and livelihoods threatened, and with lots of mystery and intrigue. The concept we came up with was basically 'E.T. meets 48 HOURS.'"

Winston designed Gnorm as an elaborate puppet, one that required the efforts of twelve technicians using wires and radio controls to move his eyes, eyelids, cheeks, lips, ears, mouth, and all other facial features in an elaborate choreography. Gnorm's walk was done with a walking rig. When a shot of his leg was needed, a child in a suit was used. Puppeteers with hands inside Gnorm's gloves gave the gnome dexterity.

According to Watson, near-perfection from Winston's effects group was necessary to keep the film credible. "You can't get away that much with a creature," he said. "The camera is focusing on this one guy. His face is filling the screen. He's got to work. If you have just his mouth moving and other things are not moving just right, the audience will know." Though photos were proffered for viewing as proof of Gnorm's realism, both Watson and Winston declined to make them available for publication.

To dispel any audience notion that Gnorm might be an actor in a suit, Winston devised body proportions that made it impossible for any dwarf or little person to fit inside. Gnorm is three feet tall, with a thick trunk, a large elongated head, huge radar-dish ears, long arms tipped with powerful human-like hands, and large, expressive eyes. Gnorm wears clothing that looks as if it's made of bark and dirt, has the ability to put people to sleep just by yawning and has skin that turns bullets into lead flapjacks.

In spite of all that, Gnorm's acting is reportedly human enough. He's not stick-



“Gnorn, the gnome, is the most extensively used non-human, not-of-this world character to date in film,” said Winston. “He carries as many scenes as any actor.”

y-cute. Rather, he’s a contentious, curmudgeonly sort who gets very impatient with Hall’s crimefighting methods. The little guy has a pretty good knowledge of English, has enough hipness in him to chill out at Venice Beach in a pair of cool shades and skateboarder’s duds, and bears a great admiration for the backsides and breasts of human women.

Winston said it was the film’s handling of the character rather than the effects technology used to bring Gnorn to life that makes UPWORLD so distinctive. “Gnorn is not state of the art,” said Winston. “He did not involve that much more than what’s been done in the past. The most important thing is to be able to understand the limitations of any performer, including one that’s made of servos and rubber skin and cable operations, and get the ultimate performance out of them. This type of thing has been done before to a certain extent in HOWARD THE DUCK. But HOWARD THE DUCK was so fucking embarrassing. It’s just done right this time.”

Winston filmed UPWORLD in 46 days in late 1988 and early 1989, finishing the effects-laden shoot just two days over schedule. Winston decided to reshoot the film’s ending after screening his first cut for an audience. Originally the film ended

continued on page 61

Gnorn (left), Winston’s subterranean gnome, comes to the surface to play second banana to Anthony Michael Hall (below), who stars as a bungling cop.



The Never Ending Story II

By Eric Hansen

Ten years ago, commercialism was disdained by German filmmakers churning out *auteur* films laden with atmosphere and disturbing cerebralism. Of the 68 films produced in Germany in 1989, most of them state-funded, only a handful actually reached movie theatres and an even smaller fraction made profits. Desperately casting about for ways to fill an artistic—and financial—vacuum, hope in German film production circles these days is spelled H-O-L-L-Y-W-O-O-D.

After *THE NEVER ENDING STORY* (1984), *ENEMY MINE* (1985), *NAME OF THE ROSE* (1986) and *LAST EXIT TO BROOKLYN* (1989), *THE NEVER ENDING STORY II* is Germany's fifth major attempt at a solution best described as "cashing into the American monopoly on high concept." The era of producer projects and sequels has finally reached the old country.

When producer Dieter Geissler started putting together the cast and crew for *THE NEVER ENDING STORY II: THE NEXT CHAPTER*, he looked everywhere but home. Of the major cast and crew positions, only a few are filled by Germans. In loading down Germany's Bavaria Studios with international talent, Geissler hoped to bring the quality of the film up to Hollywood standards: Germany's lack of effects know-how in particular was apparent on the first film, which Geissler co-produced. The sequel premiered in Germany last October and is a big technical improvement. But Hollywood standards don't come cheap—the sequel cost about \$35 million, a rare budget for Germany—half provided by Warner Bros, which opens the film nationwide domestically in April.

Author Michael Ende is now resigned to being Hollywoodized.



Ende, happier with the sequel, still decries the Americanization of his work.

For part two, Geissler assembled a first-class technical crew, including Derek Meddings (visual effects) fresh off *BATMAN*. Robert Laing (production designer, along with German Goetz Weidner) and Albert Whitlock (matte consultant, with Syd Dutton). Another German, Ludwig Angerer, provided conceptual designs with a minimum of help from English fantasy artist Patrick Woodroffe.

As director, Geissler selected Australian George Miller—not the *MAD MAX* and *WITCHES OF EASTWICK* Miller, but the *MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER* Miller, a veteran of children's movies. The sequel's target audience, kids, *young* American kids, is obvious in other areas as well. The two lead roles are played by former child models Jonathan Brandis (Bastian) and Kenny Morrison (Atreyu),

best described as cute. And some elements continued from the first film are cuddly enough for the toy shop. Falkor the Luck Dragon is a stretched-out Teddy Bear that can fly, and the Rockbiter and Rockbiter Jr. seem to serve no other function than to look neat (which indeed they do).

Miller compensates for the film's kiddie approach by keeping its look dark and mysterious. The script by Karin Howard, her screenwriting debut, parallels L. Frank Baum's *Wizard of Oz* more closely perhaps than it does the book on which it is loosely based, Michael Ende's international bestseller of the title.

Miller's darker approach to the sequel comes closer to Ende's original vision. Ende's *The Never Ending Story* first appeared on Germany's best-seller lists in 1979 and became popular world-wide, winning a readership of adults as well as children. Ende's protagonist, Bastian Bux (pronounced "Books" in German, the American version misses the pun, pronouncing it "Bucks," perhaps in keeping with the goal of the production), is a young social misfit with an existential crisis. Ende described Bastian's triumph in reinvigorating the world of his own imagination as "The creative power of man as a solution to encroaching nihilism."

A little esoteric for American kids, perhaps. That's what Geissler and co-producer Bernd Eichinger thought in making the first movie. They replaced Ende's concept with a plot Americans could swallow: a kid without enough self-confidence gains the courage to fight back at his oppressors. Ende protested loudly in the German press that the film producers had turned his German/European fantasy into an American clone, an attempt to



Atreyu (Kenny Morrison) with Falkor the Luck Dragon, Ende's fantasy concepts rendered cute, cuddly and commercial.

make another STAR WARS with monsters.

Some of Ende's pet peeves: his Luck Dragon was scaly and mean-looking, not cuddly; his "Child-like Empress" was a confusingly erotic underage doll-child nymph, not the movie's image of Shirley Temple; his Atreyu was a tough, coldly efficient hunter, a little boy with the face of a glaring dime-store wooden Indian, not the least bit cute.

Ende sold the film rights to his book for \$188,000 plus 2.5% of its net profits. Ende's net points garnered him nothing on the first film, and he said he's not expecting anything from the sequel, either. No longer complaining of the changes wrought on his work, Ende has come to accept the futility of trying to impose his vision on the machinery of

“What we think of as ‘fantastic’ in Europe is a little different than in America,” said Ende, who misses the book’s thematic complexity of an “inner world that we have lost.”

movie-making. Besides, he said he genuinely likes the second film better.

For Ende, the atmosphere of the sequel is as dark and mysterious as BATMAN, and Bastian's emotional dilemma goes beyond the first film's simple "will he fight back or won't he" cliché. Ende, himself a big movie fan, is so wrapped up in his private visions that he seems completely immune to the commercial euphoria surrounding the film at Geissler's

office. But Ende retains a restless vision of a genuinely European fantasy film.

"What we think of as 'fantastic' here in Europe is a little different than in America," he said. Ende's directors of choice for the project would have been Ridley Scott or Neil Jordan, and Ende still grieves for the thematic complexity of an "inner world that we have lost, as opposed to the American theme of self-confidence."

"Someday, I'd like to see if I'm not right," said Ende, daydreaming in a Munich cafe about an imaginary third part made according to his own wishes. "You can't tell me that American teenagers think in only one way—if we could succeed in making something truly European, it might even hit a nerve in America, it might even become a fashion. I imagine Bastian as a little French boy, in Paris. The story would look so much different. Fantasia, the world he enters into, would consist of allusions to old European paintings. I imagine a far more unusual

Fantasia."

Ende will probably never see his daydream come true, but with NEVER ENDING STORY II, Dieter Geissler might. The good news is that his production has as good a chance as almost any other American release to storm the boxoffice. That makes Geissler one of the few German producers with a ticket to play with the big boys. The bad news is that his film reaches American audiences around the same time as TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II. □

American model Jonathan Brandis as Bastian, with Rockbiter, Jr., fantasy more L. Frank Baum than Ende.



The Rockbiter, filmed in Germany with imported Hollywood effects know-how.



Puppet Master

Effects wiz David Allen turns director with

By Mark
Thomas McGee

David Allen, the Oscar-nominated effects artist known for his work in the field of stop-motion animation, makes his feature film directing debut on PUPPET MASTER II. Produced for Charles Band's newly formed Full Moon Entertainment, the film is scheduled for release by Paramount video early in 1991. "Dave did a great job," said producer Band. "For a change, the sequel is much better than the original!"

Both Band and Allen, who supervised the effects work for the first film, felt that there were script problems with PUPPET MASTER, a 1989 video release, also from Paramount. This time around Band and Allen held several story conferences with

The Puppet Master (Steve Welles), in makeup by David Barton, transferring his soul into a mannequin (Mike Todd).



Puppeteers (l to r) Yancy Calzada, John Teska and Chris Endicott rehearse Blade while David Lang makes up Jeff Weston. Allen estimated 95% of the film's effects were done live.

writer David Pabian before he started his first draft. Four drafts later Allen was still tinkering with the script, hoping to take some of the campiness out of the concept of malevolent dolls that come to life and inject more humanity.

"Not that what I did made the original script unrecognizable by any means," said Allen, "but the success of any script is in having a clear understanding of what the story is about and being able to defend, point for point, why things are happening at a particular juncture at a particular time. It's the difference between a script that's writing itself by unconscious intuition and one that has precision and understanding of why the characters behave the way they do."

One of the enticements that made the project so attractive to Allen as a director was that, for the most part, he was given the latitude to envision solutions to the problems the script presented. Not so easy was solving the problem of how to be in several places at the same

time during filming. To meet Band's ten-week rigorous deadline to finish the film on time, Allen had to supervise the film's special effects work, direct its principal photography and work on editing the footage simultaneously. Allen said he didn't exactly regret not having the time to do the hands-on work of the film's stop-motion.

"This may come as a surprise, but I don't have a wonderful, rip-roaring time while

I'm animating," Allen confessed. "I do not find it relaxing.

"It's a very intense experience," said Allen of stop-motion. "There's a paranoia that hangs over the whole process which is based on the fact that it's a time-lapse process. The only thing that is supposed to be disturbed over a period of hours or even days is the thing that you, yourself are consciously disturbing. Nothing else is supposed to move. You're asking for a complete suspension of all the physical laws and properties that can befall something that's at rest. It may all go to smash because something fell over or a light blew out. And you

don't know if it's worked until the next day. But the results are a lot of fun. When you get a scene back that's working well, it's pretty amazing."

Which is probably why Allen couldn't resist doing a few of the more critical shots himself, even though it meant time away from the editing room. The bulk of the effects work he left in the capable hands of Randy Cook, Justin Kohn, John Teska, Yancy Calzada, Chris Endicott and his

On the Puppet Master's command, Torch and the other puppets walk into their traveling case, a rear-screen stop-motion composite animated by Randy Cook.



2

killer dolls.

effects cameraman, Paul Gentry. If Allen could be certain the work would always be done the way he envisioned it, he'd be more than happy to let somebody else do it all the time. But being meticulous, Allen is hard to please.

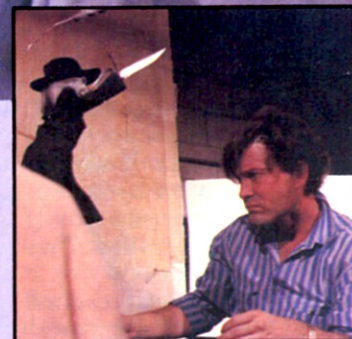
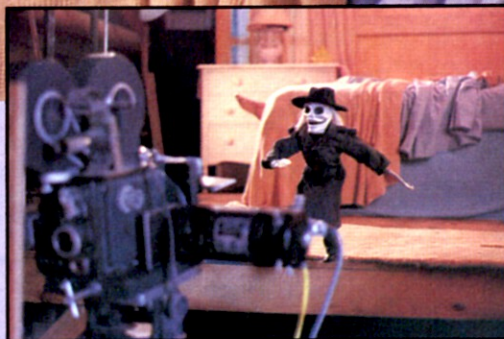
Allen said everyone worked their tails off to bring the film in on Band's schedule. The special effects were completed in less than a month. The live-action filming, slated for 27 days, went just one day over schedule. "We were running late on the last day," recalled Allen, "and we were supposed to shoot a scene of the villain on fire. The stunt coordinator was understandably reluctant to try it with a tired crew, so we shot the scene a week or two later."

Allen said he feels that current genre fare, typified by the kind of films that were released last summer, often sacrifices everything for speed and shock effect. "There's an adolescent quality lying underneath so many of them," observed Allen of the current state of fantasy filmmaking. "Most of these summer entertainments don't even pretend to a philosophy and when they try to they're rather embarrass-

Justin Kohn animates Blade and Pinhead walking for another cut in the same sequence, showing the table-top set up in front of the rear-screen live action.



Caught in the act, Blade jumps from the bed of his murder victim, an ambitious stop-motion effect. Inset: The camera, animated to dolly back as blade runs toward it. Right: Allen concentrates on a move, animating.



ing. A lot of the better pictures in the last ten or fifteen years have started to cultivate a kind of surreal quality which allows a more discursive element of storytelling. Having no illusions about creating a film of this more modern sort, I'd rather go back to a more 19th century sensibility, which I don't think is an exhausted tradition. Having said all of that, I would like to add that anyone looking for a philosophy in PUPPET MASTER II will be disappointed. It's just good, old-

fashioned entertainment."

Allen's film seems to be carrying on the tradition of tiny terrors that began at Band's Empire Entertainment with the GREMLINS-inspired GHOULIES, followed by GHOULIES II and THE DOLLS (both containing Allen's special effects). There is yet another little critter film in the works at Full Moon—SUBSPECIES.

"There's something magical about little things coming to life," said Band. "It's fun to see." As a producer Band likes to think of his films as the comic books of the '90s. With that in mind Band has joined forces with Malibu Graphics to produce a series of comic books based on Full Moon's movie product.

Next in line for Band and Allen is THE HYBRIDS, a new title for THE PRIMEVALS, a project that the two have been developing together since the late '70s. It's a fantasy/adventure of a slightly larger scale than Band is normally associated with and both parties are quite excited

about it. Does all this mean that Allen is drifting away from the effects business?

"If effects mutate into a field where you cannot work on a high-style film without going into high-tech electronic image manipulation then I would have to say yes," answered Allen. "I'm not a cognitive thinker. The hands-on aspect of special effects work is what gives me satisfaction." □

A lighting test to match foreground miniature to rear screen, as Torch attacks whip-wielding brat Sean Ryan.



N A M E

Michael Biehn stars as a CIA-bred killing

By Sheldon Teitelbaum

Avi Neshet was a young soldier in an Israeli special forces unit operating in Gaza during the early '70s when he first encountered the "Beast." Though highly trained and superbly motivated, his fellow commandos were too slow on the trigger. They lost men as a result. And this worried their superiors, who assigned them a psychiatrist.

"We were well-educated lads from moral homes," explained Neshet, now a youthful 37. "If we saw a woman bearing down on us with a weapon, or perhaps a young teenager," he recalled, "we would hesitate."

The shrink's job, recalled Neshet, was to help them overcome their reticence to shoot first, to unlock their baser instincts and unleash the "Beast" inside each. It was a task Neshet said he was able to accomplish too easily. "I saw some amazing Beasts in those days," said Neshet. "And I

Michael Biehn as the mild-mannered watchmaker who discovers he is really a nameless killer bred by the C.I.A.



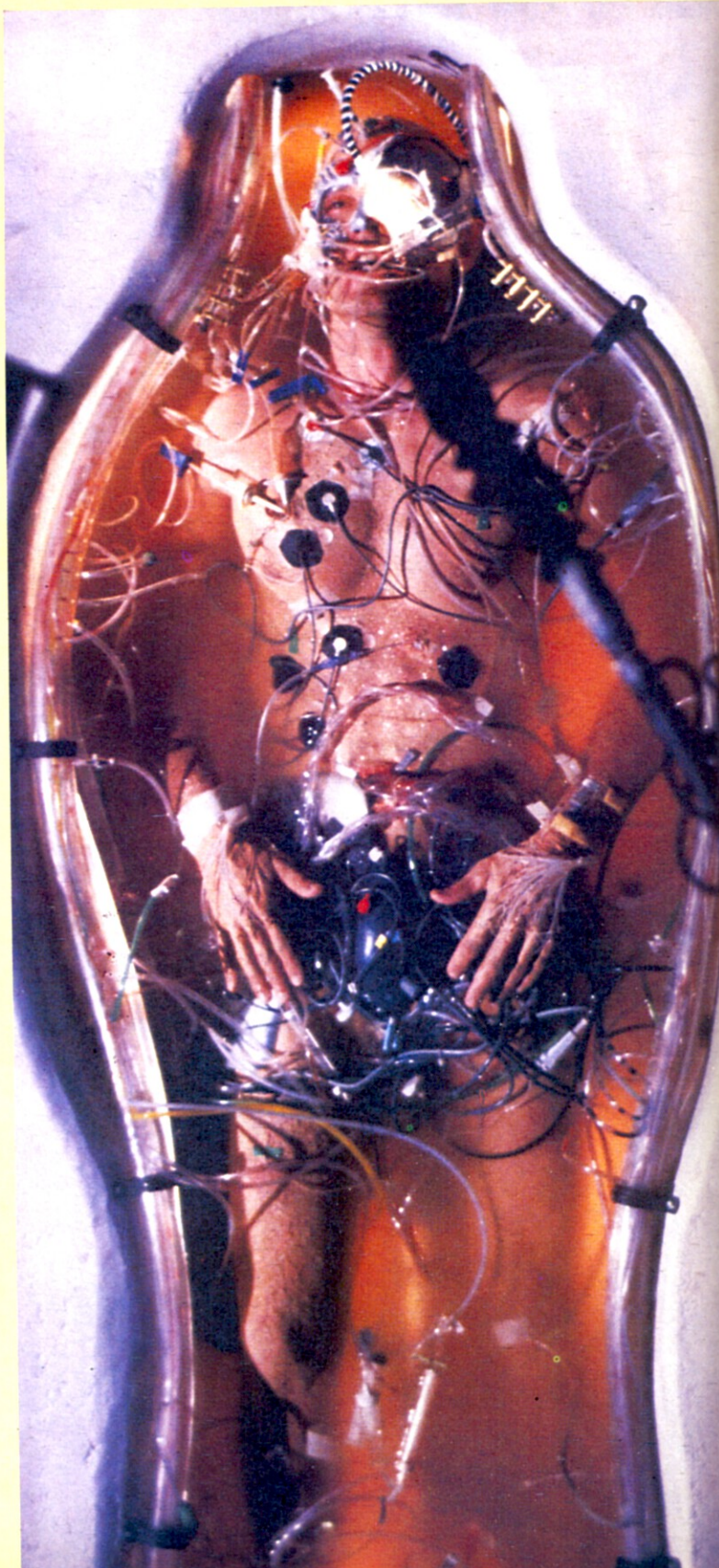
heard some horrendous stories from the psychologist, a Princeton graduate, about similar efforts undertaken by the CIA. Those stories have stayed with me for a long time."

In February, they will find expression in Neshet's first Hollywood feature, NAMELESS, a \$7 million science fiction thriller produced by Rafaela DeLaurentiis for MGM/UA. The film, which was written by Neshet, was shot in and around Los Angeles, and wrapped in mid-June after two months of principal photography. It stars Michael Biehn (THE TERMINATOR), Richard Jordan (LOGAN'S RUN), and Patsy Kensit (LETHAL WEAPON).

Neshet's cinematic nightmare revolves around a mild-mannered watchmaker who slowly discovers that he is, in fact, a CIA bred-and-trained killing machine. Rather like Arnold Schwarzenegger in TOTAL RECALL, the Biehn character learns that his real memories have been replaced by those of an ersatz persona. And as in TOTAL RECALL, he strives to regain his identity while a team of operatives tries to snuff him.

NAMELESS is not the film Neshet's fans in Israel would have anticipated. His first short THE DEAD UPON THE LIVING, was remarkably similar to last year's poorly-received comedy, A WEEKEND AT BERNIE'S, in which a pair of young men on the make *shlepp* their dead boss about, trying to pass him off as alive. Neshet shot the film in 1973, while on leave from the army. HA'LAHAKA (THE TROUPE), Neshet's first full-length feature, released in Israel in 1978, was a whimsical look at an army entertainment troupe during the War of Attrition.

Biehn inside the H.R. Giger-inspired machine—an artificial womb—used by the C.I.A. to regress him to a fetal state.



LESSS

machine for Israeli director Avi Neshet.

tion (1967-1973) with Egypt. Israel's answer to *THE SOUND OF MUSIC*, it was produced for \$200,000 and became one of the highest-grossing film in the country's history.

In 1985, Neshet directed *RAGE AND GLORY*, a film about the pre-state Irgun underground defense organization, acclaimed at film festivals in Chicago and Montreal. The film brought Neshet to the attention of Hollywood, where hitherto hermetically-sealed doors miraculously opened to him.

Neshet said he came to Hollywood to make science fiction movies. This was not something he could have done, he believes, had he remained in Israel, and not merely because the country's filmmakers lack the expertise—and the funds—required to make such movies. Rather, Israelis do not like fantasy. "In Israel," said Neshet, "reality is almost so grim it borders on the dystopian. The country, because of its circumstance, leads such a weird and violent existence, it's almost surrealistic. You don't see in Israeli literature the playfulness of *THE LITTLE PRINCE*. In cinema, you will never have an Israeli E.T. Instead, you get this great obsession with the misery of everyday life—with the pain and hardship and struggle of making it through another day.

"In Cincinnati, however, maybe you need a sense of the strange and bizarre. It acts as a stimulus, jolts you out of a mundane existence.

"I suppose I am fortunate in that I feel equally at home in both cultures. And I can see how both can get themselves in trouble really easily. In America, violence is perceived as a fantasy, and so it becomes a reality in two seconds. In Israel, joy is feared because it would lead to levity. If we are all too happy, who will guard

“In America violence is perceived as a fantasy, and so it becomes a reality in two seconds. In Israel joy is feared. If we are too happy who will guard the borders?”



Neshet directs Patsy Kensit as the doctor who uncovers the secret of Biehn's past.

the borders? A sense of wonder becomes a very dangerous thing."

For his role as Neshet's CIA-trained killing machine, Biehn, fresh from the allegedly horrendous rigors of *THE ABYSS*, where director James Cameron reportedly ran his actors through endless underwater hoops, was put through a somewhat scaled-down Israeli Defense Forces version of the U.S. Army SEALs' dreaded "Hell Week."

"Every day," recalled Neshet, "five o'clock in the morning, on the beach, for ten hours, Michael was put through sheer pain. But it made a tremendous difference to the movie. Michael didn't learn a series of techniques—he learned an attitude. And you can't fake it." An Israeli psychiatrist also trained Biehn to express dif-

ferent kinds of anxiety, from mild discomfort to full-fledged attack. Biehn had overdone his portrayal of a vein-bulging, eye-popping psychopath in *THE ABYSS*, and needed to be reined in somewhat.

Though Hollywood offered Neshet greater expertise and significantly greater budgets than he had worked with before, the best metaphor for making films in this town remains, as far as he is concerned, the waging of war. "The filmmaking adventure—the glamour people talk about—becomes minimal," he said. "We worked for eighteen hours a day for eight months, weekends included. It's amazingly difficult. Few experiences in my life have been as difficult as this. You are trying to build huge sets, elaborate action scenes, trying to make

something look realistic despite its fantastic elements, all for \$7 million, which today is not a lot of money."

Oddly, optical-laden special effects shots and set-designing feats that might have seemed outlandish to the young Israeli filmmaker working on a shoe-string budget more than a decade ago came off with nary a hitch. In *NAMELESS*, Biehn eventually encounters that which transforms him into a killing machine. It is an artificial womb—a machine which takes over every bodily function, forcing its occupant to undergo a mental, and to a degree, physical regression to the fetal state. The machine has a *Gigeresque* quality to it. Biehn's body is hooked to dozens of tubes, catheters and electrodes, making it difficult to ascertain where the organic ends and the inorganic begins.

The machine ought to have been no easier to design than it was for actor Biehn to occupy it for days at a time during the shoot. Yet, according to Neshet, building it was easier than erecting the Suez Canal bunker for his first feature, *HA'LA-HAKA*. "I spent the entire War of Attrition in a bunker," said Neshet. "During the filming of *NAMELESS*, I often thought about that stupid little bunker. This machine, which was five hundred times bigger and more elaborate, was easier to assemble. I knew that bunker by heart, so I drew it. Getting other people to build it the way I envisioned it, however, wasn't always easy. In Israel, we are all great improvisors. But in science fiction you can't wing it. You have to be extremely precise, because you want people to suspend their disbelief.

"I was able to be that precise about my machine. I had lived with it in my mind for fifteen years. I drew it, and got it made. That's the wonder of Hollywood." □

T H E A M B

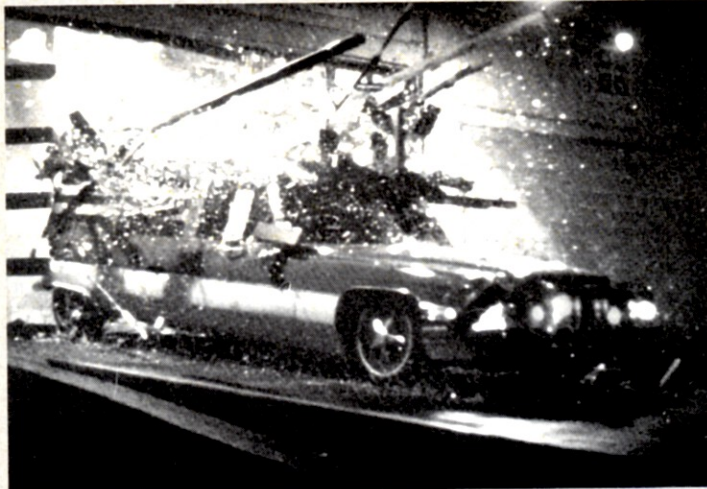
Horror specialist Larry Cohen's own trip to

By Dennis Fischer

One of the hallmarks of writer/director Larry Cohen's horror oeuvre has been his exploitation of modern, urban paranoid fears: What if toxic substances changed a normal infant into a monster—IT'S ALIVE (1974); what if an unscrupulous low-life was the only one to know the whereabouts of a monster that is wreaking havoc in a large city—Q (1982); what if the cop who stopped your car was a murderous psychopath—MANIAC COP (1988), which Cohen produced and scripted. His latest movie, THE AMBULANCE exploits our fear of the medical profession. Triumph Releasing plans to open the film early in 1991 after postponing its scheduled debut last October. The film features an all-star cast including Eric Roberts, James Earl Jones and Red Buttons.

Cohen said his producers,

Eric Roberts stars as a comic book artist who attempts to unravel the mystery of the ambulance abductions.



Patients picked up by Cohen's mysterious ambulance never make it to a hospital.

Moctesuma Esparasa and Robert Katz of Esparasa/Katz productions, asked him to come up with another title to attract the name cast. "They wanted a more sophisticated title," said Cohen. "So I came up with INTO THIN AIR. They thought that they'd get better actors if it didn't sound like an exploitation picture." Cohen said he's happy the film has reverted back to its original title. "You've got to have a hook to sell the picture and that's what it's about. It's about an ambulance that picks up people and takes them away and they're never seen again."

Cohen said he got the inspiration for the film from his own experience with an ambulance, summoned after an attack of indigestion. "What a terrifying experience it was to be taken and put in one of those things," said Cohen. "You're never more helpless than when you're strapped down in one of those stretchers. You don't know what they're sticking into your arm or what they're doing to you. You sign that piece of paper when you go in the hospital and then your life isn't your own anymore, you're under the control of somebody

else. And you don't know what they're doing. This is the ultimate in vulnerability."

Cohen's main character is Josh Baker (Eric Roberts), a comic book illustrator with a vivid imagination. (Marvel Comics head Stan Lee has a cameo role as Roberts' boss.) One day Josh spots what he thinks is the girl of his dreams (played by Janine Turner)—only to have her whisked away from under his nose by a mysterious, vintage ambulance. When Roberts is unable to locate her at any hospital, he embarks on a quest to find the girl that involves a doubting police detective (James Earl Jones) and a sympathetic patrol officer (Megan Gallagher). It's not long before Roberts has the mysterious ambulance coming after him. Roberts is aided by a gruff old journalist (Red Buttons) as he plays a game of cat-and-mouse with the sinister forces behind a series of ambulance abductions.

Cohen is well-versed with the antecedents in this particular horror subgenre, but said he crafted his entry with a difference. Noted Cohen, "It's not a picture about an ambulance that drives around by itself like

THE CAR or CHRISTINE or THE HEARSE or Stephen Spielberg's DUEL, which was basically the original, a sort of phantom of some kind. This is different. It's more of a Hitchcock film. It's a comedy with suspense. It's like Kafka—everybody's just a little exaggerated, everybody seems to be part of a conspiracy."

THE AMBULANCE marks a return to the screen for Oscar-winner Red Buttons, who Cohen spotted performing at a Director's Guild dinner. Cohen remembered trying to get a job—unsuccessfully—as a writer on Buttons' TV show for NBC when he was still in college. "I thought it was great all these years later that I finally got to write for him," said Cohen. "We just made up some improvised jokes that fleshed out the character. There wasn't a day that we weren't making up stuff together. He said to me, 'Gee, if you'd been around when I was doing my TV show,' and I said, 'Well, I was, but I couldn't get in.' I was about eighteen when I was trying to get in the door."

Cohen said it was also his practice to rewrite scenes for Roberts and Jones on the set. "I found that actors love it when they see you sit down and take a pencil and start to write new dialogue right in front of their eyes," said Cohen, who likes to extemporize during filming. "That's the greatest filmmaking experience, to have a movie that's alive to such a degree that every day you can come to work and something magical happens."

Cohen said he prefers filmmaking by the seat-of-his-pants to overly worked-out material such as that required of an effects film, in which, he noted, the director becomes like a traffic cop making sure that everyone is in their places.



U L A N C E

the hospital inspired his latest shocker.

Cohen said he likes to work from inspiration with the kind of autonomy in which he can make changes without asking permission of an executive producer. Cohen's *modus operandi* has led to his departure from some previous cinematic ventures. Cohen compared himself to director John Carpenter in that both prefer the autonomy sometimes offered by low-budget pictures over big-budget studio films in which each decision is often reviewed by several executives. Among Cohen's future plans is a film with Carl Weathers as a hit man hired to track down a serial killer, called *FEVER OF THE HUNT*, paralleling the compulsive killer with the professional.

Cohen noted how being a director sometimes requires you to play detective, particularly when it comes to finding out what is troubling a temperamental star. Cohen recalled how he almost got into a fist fight with actor Rip Torn on the first day of shooting *THE PRIVATE FILES OF J. EDGAR HOOVER*, and how he had to make special arrangements for Eric Bogosian's



Reliving the nightmare, director Cohen stands in for an ambulance victim during filming.

hypoglycemia on *SPECIAL EFFECTS*. Cohen's detective work on *THE AMBULANCE* involved Roberts, who Cohen said does *not* deserve a reputation for being difficult to work with. Roberts was upset on the first few days of filming and Cohen found out it was because the film's schedule had been moved up a week and Roberts hadn't been told.

Cohen recalled how he tried

to calm down his angry star. "I said, 'You win the argument. We're gonna do it your way because you're right, the producers are wrong.' I said I wouldn't start shooting the picture for an additional week. 'You've got your additional week.' But he wouldn't stop screaming at me. So I said, 'Look, this is no conversation. A conversation is you talk, I talk, you talk, I talk.' I said, 'I can't work under these conditions. I'm not going to direct this picture. We'll get somebody else, or you're not going to be in this picture. We'll get another actor, but we're not going to do this picture together.' He said, 'Okay, fuck you, I quit,' and he walked out of the office."

Cohen said he started to unpack his desk and leave. "I knew the producers would have to make a decision between the two of us, and probably they'd choose Eric Roberts because the money is predicated on him being in the film.

But the door opened and in came Eric Roberts again. He said, 'Okay, lets make a movie.' And after that, every day he came to the set, he'd say, 'Good morning, boss, what do you want me to do today?' And there was a kiss at the end of the day and never a harsh word. He liked the idea that I was writing lines for him on the set. He'd say, 'Gimme a Larry Cohen line for this, give me a Larry Cohen line for that.' I hope to work with him again. The first days on the set are sometimes a nightmare. You have to get through it."

Cohen said he was also pleased to work with James Earl Jones. "He was totally unaffected and always open to new things," recalled Cohen. "He's a great actor. I appreciated the fact that he would try anything. He didn't intellectualize my suggestions by wanting to talk about them. He'd simply go out and do it, and then we'd decide together whether it worked or not."

One of Cohen's favorite memories of the filming was shooting a scene which required Jones to lie in the gutter. The shooting took place on a hot and steamy New York night at four in the morning, in the Bowery. The street had been washed down for the shot but Cohen felt badly about leaving the legendary screen actor lying in the gutter for so long when the lighting had to be changed. Cohen suggested Jones go to his trailer and cool off. Jones said he preferred to stay right where he was because it was nice and cool in the gutter. Cohen said he couldn't resist seeing for himself and laid down next to him. "Well," said Jones, turning to Cohen, "here we are, back where we began." □

Between set-ups, Cohen kept company with actor James Earl Jones in the gutter of a New York bowery street. Quipped Jones, "Here we are, back where we began."



HARDWARE

Low budget, low tech, and perhaps low IQ, this post-apocalypse still packs a wallop.

By Brooks Landon

As described in the *REsearch Industrial Culture Handbook*, San Francisco performance artist, metal sculptor, and mechanical wizard Mark Pauline "manufactures maniac machines with personalities . . . then turns them loose on people in parking lots and other public sites amidst dynamite detonations, spurting blood, rockets on cables, dead animal-robot mutations," and so on. Pauline's fearsome robot creations fight and destroy one another in a nihilistic and morbid demolition derby, more than justifying the claim that Pauline is "Hieronymus Bosch come to life in the graveyard of the Industrial Revolution."

HARDWARE, a movie deeply inscribed with Pauline's techno-punk sensibility, pays homage to Pauline's inspiration by running clips on the TV monitor usually playing in the background of the film's high-security apartment central set. But even if audiences miss those fleeting visual footnotes—videos with titles such as *MENACING MACHINE MAYHEM*, *ASCENIC HARVEST FROM THE KINGDOM OF PAIN*, or *A BITTER MESSAGE OF HOPELESS GRIEF*—their loss will be small, since **HARDWARE** does nothing less than to expand the threatening Pauline aesthetic into a feature film, substituting a woman artist for one of Pauline's berserker machines.

Low-budget, low-tech, and—

“Richard Stanley’s directing debut cyborgs together ultraviolence, a compellingly wasted future, uniformly twisted characters, and an all-pervasive bad attitude.”



San Francisco performance artist Mark Pauline poses with the arm of one of his berserker robots, one of the inspirations for Stanley's techno-punk sensibility.

if you make much of a point of listening to the dialogue—low IQ, **HARDWARE** nevertheless manages to pack a high-intensity, high-aggro wallop, cyborging together ultraviolence, a tightly framed, compellingly wasted post-apocalyptic future, uniformly twisted characters, and an all-pervasive bad attitude.

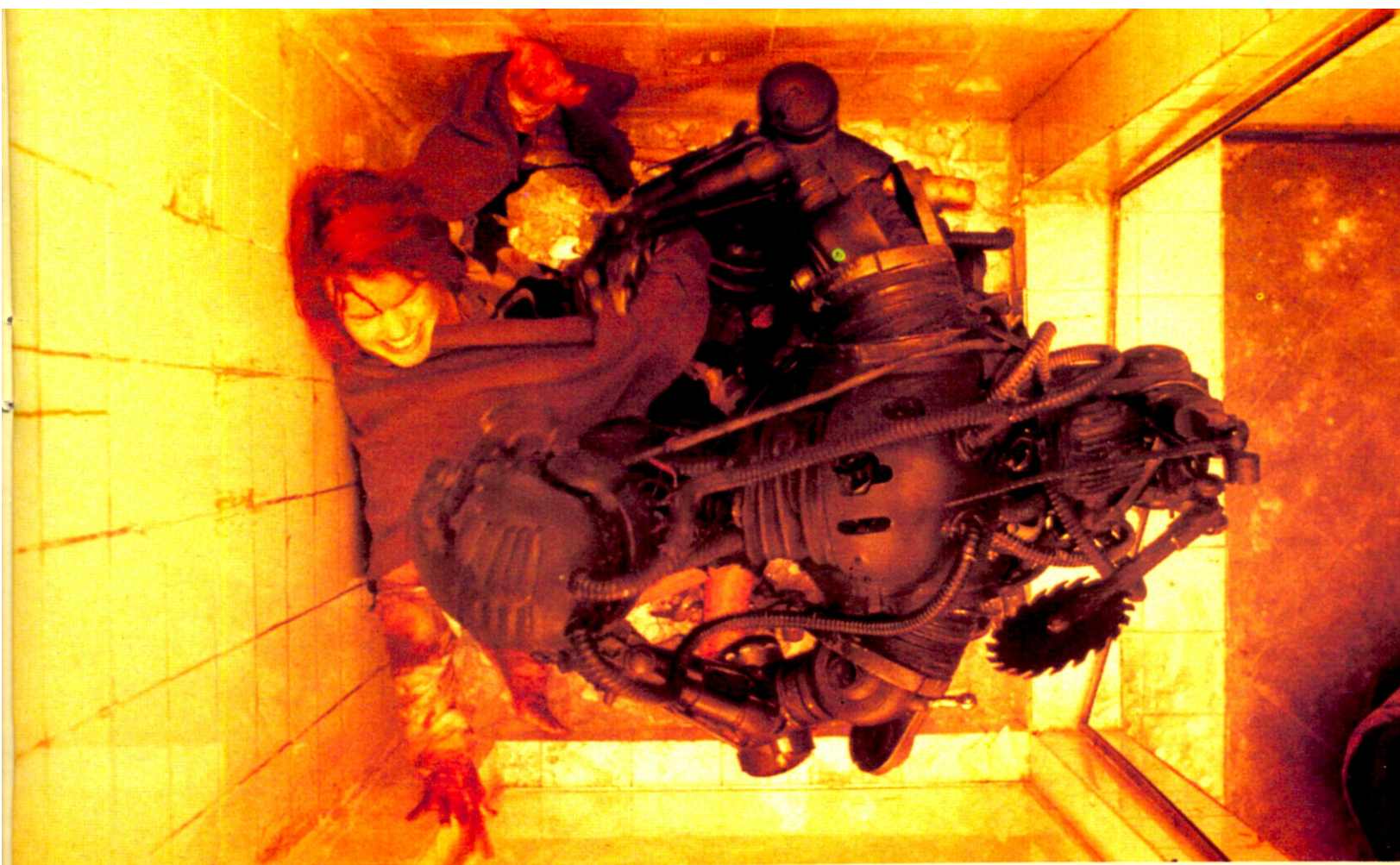
From its opening voiceover by Iggy Pop, playing a nihilistic "War Radio" deejay ("Angry Bob, the man with the industrial dick"), to its insistently staccato closing theme by Public Image ("This is what you

want, this is what you get," repeated endlessly), **HARDWARE** throbs with the hostility of Industrial music, and while its makers may cite cyberpunk influences and invoke the cyberpunk semblance, they do so not so much in terms of the cyberpunk science fiction writing of William Gibson, Bruce Sterling, and John Shirley as they do in the sense that Gibson featured a Pauline machine in his third novel *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, and in the sense that Industrial music groups such as Ministry, Motorhead, Public Image, Meat Beat

Manifesto, KMFDM, Ajax, and Revolting Cocks—successors to Throbbing Gristle, Cabaret Voltaire, and SPK—are now often found in music stores in sections labeled "Cyberpunk."

Indeed, notwithstanding its conceptual ties to Pauline, **HARDWARE** looks and sounds like nothing quite so much as an eyeball-kicking, eardrum-assaulting feature-length Industrial music video, which is hardly surprising since writer/director Richard Stanley has made videos for Public Image and other Industrial groups. These are the videos you probably won't see on MTV, as they make run-of-the-mill heavy metal stuff by Poison and Whitesnake seem almost sweetly sentimental in comparison. And yet, it must be noted that apart from its mainlined Industrial sound, **HARDWARE** also features acoustical guitar picking of the sort we associate with westerns, and sacred pieces from Rossini, the magpie eclecticism of the soundtrack literally setting the tone for all other aspects of the film's collaged composition.

The final credit for **HARDWARE**, clearly a last-minute addition, grudgingly states that it was "based on" a Judge Dredd story in *2000 A.D.*, and, apparently, its action does closely parallel that of the 1980 comic story, "SHOK!," by Steve MacManus and Kevin O'Neill (see sidebar, page 43). In both, an adventurer brings home to his metal-sculptress lover the head of a shattered



Stacey Travis as Jill, the film's really tough robot basher, fighting off the advances of Stanley's Mark 13 killing machine while cornered in her apartment shower stall.

and seemingly lifeless robot which turns out to be just waiting for the right moment to rebuild itself and continue its mission of killing humans. The artist is trapped in her apartment with the deadly robot and the battle is on. Critical observers might note that any conscious or unconscious borrowing did not go far enough, as the Judge Dredd comic world is considerably more consistent and better motivated than that of the film. Indeed, so familiar are so many ideas in this film that it's hard to imagine that lawyers for the comic didn't have to stand in line awaiting their turn to make a claim. But for all of its *deja vu* moments, whether we think of them as homages or rip-offs, this is a movie that sets itself apart from any conceivable antecedents.

As has been true of so many science fiction films, post-BLADE RUNNER, HARDWARE is all about atmosphere and no brain, focusing on what the future looks like more than what it means, but

its atmosphere is riveting, delivering a degree of grimy realism on a shoestring budget, so well that it can only make you wonder where the millions went on TOTAL RECALL. Uniformly dark or red and almost claustrophobically framed with each shot overloaded with busy details, HARDWARE challenges the eye with BLADE RUNNER-ish textures without the sweep of its panoramas, effectively distracting us from thinking much about the fact that this "world" consists almost entirely of a single set.

Director Stanley's efficiency in milking his cast, setting, and special effects resources for all they could provide is matched only by his efficiency in milking other sources for their look, scenes, shots, and stories. Which is to say that whatever is original in HARDWARE seems almost accidental, as if the film's manic borrowings from BLADE RUNNER, the MAD MAX movies, MAX HEADROOM, SATURN 3, ROBOCOP, ALIEN, THE TERMINATOR, and

many lesser films and music videos somehow grafted together to make a creature that is more than just the sum of its parts.

Or, to put it another way, HARDWARE is so manically derivative that it finally achieves a kind of goofy integrity. If nothing else, this is one of the most relentlessly unsentimental science fiction films ever made. In fact, viewed from the angle that all of its action ironically occurs on Christmas Eve, starts with the gift of an interesting looking robot head, and features a Santa Claus-girthed, roly-poly and jolly sleazeball voyeur who, courtesy of his state-of-the-art peeping Tom gear, actually *does* know whether the female protagonist has been naughty or nice, HARDWARE might be thought of as an impressively original—if truly demented—Christmas pic.

That deliciously slimy voyeur, Lincoln "just call me Link" Weinberg, Jr., delightfully played by BATMAN's William Hootkins, almost steals the film on the way to becom-

ing the robot's first victim, and therein lies one of HARDWARE's weaknesses: not only will its Mark 13 robot never make the Robot Hall of Fame (it looks good enough, but has the personality of a vacuum cleaner), its primary characters (and the cast is so small that there aren't really any secondary characters) are essentially one-dimensional. Robot and humans exist only to fight each

William Hootkins steals the film on the way to becoming the Mark 13's first victim, as a deliciously slimy voyeur.



other, and while Dylan McDermott, Stacey Travis, and Jon Lynch all deliver more than creditable performances, we learn so little about them that Hootkins' voyeur seems infinitely more interesting than anyone or anything else in the film. And the scene in which we first become aware of Link's sicko surveillance is marvelous, as we think we are watching Mo and Jill's lovemaking through the awakening, infrared sensing "eyes" of the Mark 13 robot, only to discover that we are in fact looking through Link's high-tech telescope. **HARDWARE** is hardly the first film to stress the viewer's complicity in an essentially voyeuristic act, but it does so with perverse panache.

The dialogue between Mo and Jill that *should* give us some feel for them and their relationship wanders between unconvincing concern for the state of the world and banalities about Jill's art, abdicating their characterization to one shower scene, one sex scene, and their individual approaches to robot bashing. For all their rambling comments about whether the "stupid, sadistic, and suicidal" world is a good enough place in which to have children and their realization that the Mark 13 may be the government's final solution to enforce a new Population Con-

Travis and Dylan McDermott as Mo, Jill's ineffectual soldier-of-fortune boyfriend who has a cybernetic hand.



HARDWARE

FILMING HIGH CONCEPT ON A LOW BUDGET

How rock video director Richard Stanley called in the favors to mount his stylish debut.

By Alan Jones

HARDWARE is a \$1 million slice of science fiction sickness produced by Britain's Palace Pictures, the company that made **THE COMPANY OF WOLVES** (1985) and **HIGH SPIRITS** (1988). The film marks the directorial debut of 24 year-old rock video stylist Richard Stanley, based on his own script. Stanley's work for underground bands included music clips for Public Image, Ltd., Fields of the Nephilim and Renegade Soundwave.

Stanley's script, written for Wicked Films and TV, Ltd., was considered a hot property by Palace. "It's heavy stuff," said Palace co-producer Joanne Sellar, the 26 year-old ex-girlfriend of Palace producer Stephen Wooley. "It's nihilistic and very bleak, with much of the plot revolving around sado-masochism and drug abuse. It appealed to Palace because it was so on the edge. Nothing like it has come out of Britain for decades."

Palace released Sam Raimi's **THE EVIL DEAD** in Britain, and have wanted to match its shock value and boxoffice receipts ever since. "I was told to go for it without apology," said Sellar, "and worry about the ratings board later." Stanley's shock footage was trimmed by U.S. distributor Miramax Films to win an R-rating for its U.S. release last September.

Backed by the financial cartel of Palace, British Screen, British Satellite Broadcasting and Miramax, **HARDWARE** was the first movie to be filmed



Stanley, the 24 year-old bad boy of video.

at the Roundhouse in London's Chalk Farm area. Once a hippie concert venue—Jimi Hendrix played there—the Roundhouse became a movie museum and a fringe theatre before its studio potential was discovered by the **HARDWARE** company. Its only drawback was a lack of soundproofing. Its circular auditorium housed the film's one set—Jill's apartment, complete with futuristic city backdrop. The restaurant area was used by the crew to break for meals. The dressing rooms were equipped for the needs of the cast. And Image Animation's five-man special effects team found room left over for their in-house workshop.

Much of the auditorium's stockpiled trash from long-gone theatrical productions found its way into **HARDWARE**. Costume designer Michael Baldwin managed to clothe the entire cast plus

extras for an amazing \$6,000 thanks to the debris he found lying around. "Everybody did this picture for next to nothing," said Sellar, who co-produced with **Wicked's** Paul Trybits. "The crew were mainly rock video people who saw **HARDWARE** as a showcase—a way to break out of promotional work into features. Initially the schedule was for seven weeks, but Miramax thought an extra week would make a difference in quality." The unit ended up toiling for nine weeks, working tiring twelve-hour days, six days a week. "The boundless enthusiasm we had for the project kept us going," said Sellar.

Stanley is a rather oddball character. Dressed for filming in self-styled "Man With No Name" chic, he has an anti-establishment image and manifesto he was determined the film would live up to. He bristled at the suggestion that **HARDWARE** might have been influenced by either **ROBOCOP** or **THE TERMINATOR**.

"That's bullshit!" screamed Stanley. "It's cyberpunk combined with an Italian sensibility and my personal obsessions. All **ROBOCOP** did was make it possible for **HARDWARE** to attract financing. I've failed miserably if it ends up looking like either one of those films. My script was considered so tasty, the initial deal was struck on the fact it could be done dirt cheap. I think they wanted **ALIEN** for \$1.98. What's gone wrong is they aren't getting **ALIEN**, nor is it



Stacey Travis as Jill grapples with the Mark 13, puppet effects by Image Animation.

quite as cheap as they expected. It's a serious statement about chaos with a bad attitude, one I wanted to play like the worst possible acid trip or THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE and JUST IMAGINE rolled into one!

"It was always my intention to make SHORT CIRCUIT 3 anyway," joked Stanley who has no formal training, "apart from a very dodgy film course." Before establishing himself as an innovative independent filmmaker with award-winning shorts like RITES OF PASSAGE and INCIDENTS IN AN EXPANDING UNIVERSE, Stanley's rock video work regularly featured violence and prosthetic makeups. He originally envisioned filming HARDWARE in Super 16mm over a longer period of time.

"That's why I wrote it with no budget in mind," said Stanley. "An organic creature would have been impossible to pull off. But a mechanical, malfunctioning robot meant I could get away with a lot of stiffness and the multitude of problems you can disguise with sound effects. A control cable

“The producers wanted ALIEN for \$1.98. They got a psychedelic neo-fascist entertainment spiked for the '90s, played dead pan.”

- Director Richard Stanley -

in a shot could be part of the decor. Everything electrical continuously fusing allowed me to experiment with different lighting effects. I thought of every infinite way I could cover up a low budget."

Going the mainstream route for filming Stanley admitted he alienated more people on the HARDWARE shoot than he has in years. "Mainly because I have no idea what I'm doing," said Stanley. "I want to inflict serious damage on the audience, I know that much. So I'm sticking my finger up at everything. I purposely wrote the dialogue to be vitriolic and disgusting. I've included Auschwitz references, genocide and other nastiness to underline how these things won't mean anything to 21st Century people. I'm moving punk from vinyl to film."

With the film's post-holocaust zone as a direct reference to Tarkovsky's STALKER, its primary red color wash a deliberate lift from Lars von Trier's THE ELEMENT OF CRIME, its REAR WINDOW sub-plot and all manner of Sergio Leone spaghetti western motifs, HARDWARE is an eclectic mix of homages Stanley hoped he could successfully fashion into what he termed "a psychedelic neo-fascist entertainment spiked for the '90s but played dead pan."

Stanley freely admitted to stealing story ideas for the film from two Italian directors he admires, Dario Argento and Michele Soavi. "Soavi's STAGEFRIGHT showed me how effective a basic one-set film could be. Soavi made a great deal out of nothing and his style has been a huge inspiration. Argento and Soavi aren't genre directors, they're artists who create genuine poetry. I'm not ashamed to say I've gratuitously stolen from their great Italian horror tradition."

HARDWARE stars STEEL MAGNOLIAS' Dylan McDermott as Mo, Stacey Travis as Jill, and CAL's Jon Lynch. Stanley explained the film's casting like this. "Mo had to be an American actor to satisfy the backers. I wanted NEAR DARK's Bill Paxton, but SLIPSTREAM ended that idea. Jon Lynch is Shades, Mo's partner, and we chose him because he played the acid trip scene very well as a screen test. I chose Stacey because she was the only actress in Los Angeles who didn't want to sleep with me to get the part!"

Travis noted that Stanley's filming of the script in sequence aided her in fashioning a performance. She said that during filming the set of her apartment became more familiar to her than her own apartment in Los Angeles. "I don't see gore

Stanley's cyberpunk imagery, the zone trooper who finds the Mark 13 (left) and the polluted urban center of his home base.



“I have no idea what I’m doing. I want to inflict serious damage on the audience, I know that. I’m moving punk from vinyl to film.”

- Director Richard Stanley -

worked on RAWHEAD REX and LIVING DOLL, both for Peter Litten’s Coast to Coast effects company where Caitlin spent two years working on the still-stalled DOCTOR WHO—THE MOVIE. The freelance designer said he jumped at the chance to work on HARDWARE because of his love of robotics. “Richard’s first designs were too much like ROBOP-COP’s Ed 209,” noted Caitlin. “Mark 13 had to fit in a rucksack and the challenge was to create something entirely different. It also had to be filmed undercranked to give it an insect-like quality.”

Six models of Mark 13 were used for the filming, according to Caitlin. “A modified battery remote-control one costing \$80,000, a full costume, a foam one for stunt work, a fire resistant one, a pair of walking legs and a bag of bits. One head fit all with a gooseneck. We had three months to get everything ready, but it was still a rush, and we sculpted straight into fiberglass with no time for sanding down. As HARDWARE is a dark movie, we could get away with some rough edges due to lighting. I wanted to use a slave system for the remote robot, but we didn’t have the time. We didn’t need

more money, the challenge was getting it finished on time.”

Vendetta supplied the visual effects for HARDWARE, though it’s hard to take Stanley’s word for the way they achieved one particular illusion. “There’s a shot from the high rise apartment’s balcony looking down on the vertically distant road,” said Stanley. “They’re spraying maggots with fluorescent paint and letting them crawl across the floor to simulate traffic. Honestly!”

Though Stanley cost Palace more than they bargained for with HARDWARE, the company is still more than willing to produce his next film. To be filmed on location in Namibia in April, the already controversial DUST DEVIL is described by South African-born Stanley as “A DRY WHITE SEASON meets THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE.” Noted Sellar, returning as producer, “It’s a politico, psycho, western road movie thriller about a white guy who kills other whites in the desert. The three main leads are the psycho, a white woman and a black cop. It’s based on a twenty-minute short Richard made when he was fourteen and confronts all the issues you would expect.” □

Stanley amid Jill’s trashed apartment set, built at London’s Roundhouse Theatre.

William Hootkins as the film’s peeping tom, fittingly about to have his eyes poked out by the Mark 13. Below: Other of Stanley’s graphic set-pieces that nearly got the film an X-rating, drugged by the Mark 13, Mo imagines his arm rotting away, and one of Jill’s would-be rescuers, cut in half by malfunctioning security doors.



movies,” said Travis. “They are easier to be in because you can see how fake they really are. What I didn’t see for the first few weeks was Mark 13 himself. And then when I did, Peter Stone, who wears the suit, was so nice to me he killed my hatred for it stone dead!”

Stanley called the film’s Mark 13 robot, “a genuinely evil and scary critter. It’s a cross between a Nazi stormtrooper, a spider and a motorbike. We’ve got the greatest droid on the block—one I had to believe in myself. That’s why I got so behind schedule—if I can buy it, the audience will too.”

Mark 13 was the responsibility of 25 year-old Paul Caitlin working under the Image Animation umbrella. Caitlin



HARDWARE

COMIC STRIP ROBOT SUES

trol Bill ("It's time to make a clean break with procreation"), Mo and Jill never mouth more than tired clichés, as when Jill complains of her art, "It's like I'm fighting with the metal and so far the metal is winning."

While that line *might* be taken as an ironic foreshadowing of the *real* fight with metal Jill is soon to face, it's lost in the rest of the artistic "happy talk" that constitutes most of the dialogue between Jill and Mo. After a somewhat ponderous opening hour of such banter, the robot's body splattering rampage comes as a relief.

All it seems we really need to know about Jill is that she's a dope-smoking artist; all we need to know about Mo is his vaguely military soldier of fortune occupation, that he has a nifty mechanical right hand (something Mark Pauline could use, since he blew up his own hand working on one of his projects), and that he screws up a lot; all we need to know about his friend Shades is that he's a space pilot who wears dark glasses and does acid. Add in the oddly unlikely detail that one of the forty dozen ways the Mark 13 robot has for killing humans is to inject them with a hallucinogenic toxin, and you get the feeling that this film wanted to have *something* to do with drugs, no matter how gratuitous the connection. For instance, we never really learn what Mo thinks about anything, but in an incongruously stunning display of fractal imagery we get to see his dying brainflashes—at which point we can retroactively recognize, but hardly make sense of the previously unexplained flashes that open the film.

However, if the individual characterizations remain unsatisfying in *HARDWARE*, there are some interesting compensations: Jill is a really *tough* robot basher, Shades is a hoot as he's forced to do his robot fighting while on a heavy-duty acid trip, and Mo endears himself to us with the film's most self-conscious touch as he warns his friend Shades, "Don't call me Max." Moreover, *HARDWARE*'s sexual politics are rare, if not unique, in science fiction films: tough

With *HARDWARE* in the can and accruing high volume world sales, British producer Palace Pictures had a real shock, thanks to "SHOK!" That's the title of a seven-page comic strip first published in England in the 1981 *Judge Dredd Annual*, distributed in August 1980 by Fleetway Publications, owners of the comic *2000 A.D.*, which reprinted the strip in its February 4, 1989 issue (# 612). Fleetway filed a lawsuit against Palace and Richard Stanley accusing the writer/director of plagiarism.

The similarities between the strip, written by Ian Rogan and drawn by Kevin O'Neill, and *HARDWARE*

are indeed startling. "SHOK!" concerns a space pilot who brings home pieces of a robotic Trooper to his sculptress wife living on the top floor of a high-rise block. The robot, programmed to kill, rebuilds its head and torso, seals the automatic doors, and proceeds to stalk her around the apartment with infra-red heat sensors—at one stage confused by an open refrigerator door.

But Stanley said he didn't plagiarize "SHOK!" Stanley maintained the plot of the film came to him in a dream, when he was just seventeen years old. Stanley's defense is that he never, ever reads comics. Stanley said his major source of inspiration

to write *HARDWARE* was derived from the robot menace of director Stanley Donen's 1980 science fiction epic *SATURN 3*. And Stanley is convinced Rogan and O'Neill used the same movie as an artistic springboard.

Nevertheless, Palace decided to make an out of court settlement with Fleetway for an undisclosed five figure sum. A percentage was given to Rogan (a pseudonym for writer Steve MacManus), and O'Neill. A hastily added screen credit acknowledging the comic book connection was tacked on to the end of the film so the worldwide release of *HARDWARE* would not be held up.

Alan Jones

The comic's heat sensing robot is confused by an open freezer (left), the film's can't find Stacey Travis inside a refrigerator (center), a coincidence? Right: The comic strip killer.



paramilitary Mo does not, in fact, save Jill from the Mark 13—to which he stupidly exposes her in the first place, while tough artist Jill proves as determined and deadly as her mechanical adversary. And when was the last time you saw a movie in which the male protagonist dies while his faithful acid-tripping sidekick, who had revealed more than a passing interest in his male lead's girlfriend, lives?

HARDWARE is simply one of those films that are fun to watch but painful to think about. Filled with nice touches, body slams, and ultimately pointless symmetries, it really

isn't "about" anything, offering in the best postmodern tradition, miles of surface without an inch of depth. *Neuromancer* author and proto-cyberpunk William Gibson has said that what interests him most in writing are the "gratuitous moves," the details that lead nowhere, the subtleties that call attention only to themselves. In this sense, *HARDWARE* is nothing but "gratuitous moves," adroitly executed to indeterminate—almost random—effect.

One example stays with me. In one brief scene, two streetwise and scruffy, football-padded black security guards are shown playing . . . chess.

The older guard checkmates his incredulous younger opponent, triumphantly identifying his move as the Sicilian Maneuver and explaining: "That's how you beat computers. Machines don't understand sacrifice; neither do morons." It's a wonderfully surprising scene with a great line that leads absolutely nowhere. Within moments, these chessplayers are spectacularly bloody corpses, and the idea of sacrifice as a way to outwit machines dribbles away with their blood. At its best, *HARDWARE* delivers a lot of little surprises like this; at its worst, they all dribble away. □

POPCORN

How horror screenwriter Alan Ormsby got derailed on the way to his directing debut.

By Gary Kimber

Lensed in the less than bustling film community of sunny Jamaica during late 1989, the innocuously titled **POPCORN** is set for a major 1100 screen release across North America on February 1, produced by Movie Partners Inc., a division of the giant real estate development company, York Trillium, headquartered in Toronto. At \$9 million, **POPCORN** is the company's first big-budget production. Fledgling distributor Studio Three has anted up the multi-millions in prints and advertising needed for the movie's theatrical launch.

The film, written by Alan Ormsby (**MY BODYGUARD**, **CAT PEOPLE**) and intended as his solo directing debut, concerns a group of film students who decide to put on a festival of horror movies from the '50s. One of the films, "Possessor" was never released because its auteur director went berserk and tried to kill his wife, the lead actress, and his daughter, who is now one of the film students at the festival. Gradually the spirit of the insane director, thought to have perished in a blazing inferno twenty years earlier, returns in the body of Toby, one of the film students, who begins bumping off members of the audience one by one.

Toronto real estate magnate Howard Hurst chose **POPCORN** as his entry into big-stakes filmmaking because he liked its parody of '50s horror



Bruce Glover and Lori Creevey in "The Amazing Electrified Man," one of the ersatz '50s films that serves as a backdrop to the film's standard slasher formula.

films. Hurst partnered with Jamaican businessman Karl Hendrickson, acting as co-executive producers, to shoot much of the film's action at Kingston's Ward Theatre, the setting of the film's horror movie festival. The ersatz '50s films that serve as a backdrop to the story's action—"Mosquito," "The Amazing Electrified Man," and "The Stench"—were shot at the Ward. Hurst noted that he found shooting in Jamaica not to be cost effective. "Had the Ward not been available, we would not have gone there," said Hurst, who estimated that about 35% of the film was shot at studios in Toronto.

Starring Tom Villard, Jill Schoelen, Tony Roberts, Dee Wallace Stone, and everybody's "favorite Martian" Ray Walston, the production did not proceed without a few not-

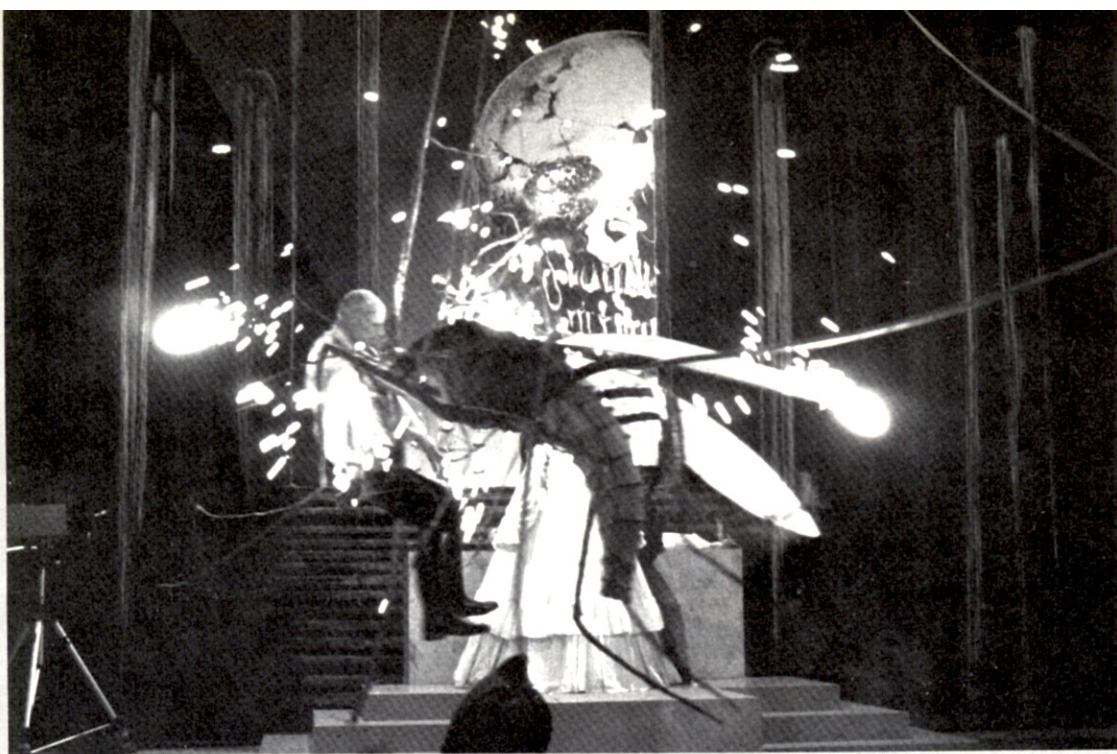
able missteps, including a major casting change and the dismissal of Ormsby as director. Amy O'Neil, the young actress in Touchstone's surprise hit of 1989, **HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS**, was hired to play Maggie the haunted daughter of the mad director, only to be replaced after three weeks of shooting. Hurst said O'Neil was a talented actress, but was let go because she did not possess the necessary experience to essay the role convincingly. O'Neil was replaced by Jill Schoelen (**THE STEPFATHER**), who had originally lost out on the part to O'Neil. A call to O'Neil, through her agent, was not returned.

Ormsby was replaced as director around the same time O'Neil was let go, though Hurst said the rapport that often develops between a direc-

tor and the lead actor had nothing to do with their coincidental departures. The man brought in to take the reins from Ormsby, Mark Herrier painted a different picture. "O'Neil left shortly after my arrival and was replaced through no fault of her own," said Herrier. "She had been cast and directed in a certain way. The producers decided the film needed a different approach. The proverbial artistic differences had set in."

Herrier would seem an odd choice to replace the more experienced Ormsby, known to horror fans for his scripts for director Bob Clark's **CHILDREN SHOULDN'T PLAY WITH DEAD THINGS** (a 1972 first effort in which Ormsby also acted and contributed the makeup effects), like **POPCORN**, an outrageous blend of comedy and shocks, Clark's **DEATHDREAM** (1972), also known as **DEAD OF NIGHT**, the story of a Vietnam vet who returns home as a walking corpse and **DERANGED** (1974), the story of Ed Gein, the Wisconsin ghoul who inspired **PSYCHO**, co-directed by Ormsby with Jeff Gillen, another veteran of Clark's low-budget horror productions. Once Clark and Ormsby headed to Hollywood, Ormsby largely eschewed his horror roots to write more mainstream scripts like Clark's **PORKY'S II**.

Herrier's main claim to fame is an acting role in Clark's sophomoric but highly successful rip-off of National



The attack of the giant "Mosquito," filmed on the stage of the Ward Theatre, Kingston, Jamaica's once grand bygone movie palace.

Lampoon's ANIMAL HOUSE, the original PORKY'S. Herrier had also directed a couple of short subjects, one of which dealt with the trading of baseball cards that starred his childhood friend Jeffrey Combs (REANIMATOR, FROM BEYOND), as well as some stage productions in Los Angeles. Herrier reportedly got the POPCORN job on the recommendation of Ormsby's one-time friend, PORKY'S director Clark.

Hurst was on the scene in Jamaica and revealed why Ormsby didn't work out. "We were running terribly overtime and overbudget," said Hurst. "Alan spent much of the first three weeks shooting the '50s-style vignettes. Obviously the style you use to send up monster movies of 35 years ago must differ from how you shoot a picture for the '90s. There had to be that discernible difference and it was not coming through in the dailies. In my mind it was a mutual parting of the ways." A source close to the production revealed that the imbroglio between Ormsby and the producers came to a head when Ormsby insisted on taking time out to shoot a promotional rap video, even though the film was behind schedule and costing the producers \$65,000 per shooting day.

"I think it was just the typical

creative differences," said Herrier of Ormsby's departure. "Ormsby had written a screenplay so good it could have been interpreted several different ways. He chose to emphasize the darker aspects whereas the producers wanted a lighter focus." Calls to Ormsby's agent to get Ormsby's response were not returned.

Herrier, a tall, bespectacled, thirtyish man who speaks softly, offered some thoughts on horror films and modern society. "I think we, as a culture, were a lot more innocent back then and could be easily scared," he said of the '50s films POPCORN in part parodies. "Now each new slasher film isn't about scaring you, it's about how grotesquely someone can be decapitated. We need to go back to where plot carries the weight."

By general consensus, most seem to agree Ormsby wrote a wonderfully clever script. "I was attracted to it because of the movies within movies idea," said Herrier, "and it wasn't a typical 'let's get some teenagers in the woods and hack 'em all to death, one by one.' It was a little more involving and the characters were fleshed out."

With the three '50s-style mini-movies played strictly for laughs, intercut throughout the murderous goings ons in the real movie, the question

naturally arises: is POPCORN a comedy or is it a horror film? If you listen to Hurst it's neither. Fashionably, he disdains use of the term "horror." Hurst prefers "thriller," fearing the narrowing of his potential market. Make no mistake though, POPCORN is a horror film. But is it also a comedy? "That's a good question," said Herrier. "I'm still trying to decide that myself. It isn't a raw, high intensity slash 'em up, and it's not a raucous comedy either."

Special effects for the film included an eight-foot mosquito for the "Mosquito" spoof. It was created by special effects supervisor Georgio Gerrari which, according to Herrier, could buzz, light up, turn around and flop. Like any temperamental actor, the prop had its off days but performed well in the end. Bob Clark (not the progenitor of PORKY'S) handled special makeup effects, including an extensive prosthetic burn design for victim/killer Toby, played by Villard. Noted Herrier, "Villard would sometimes be in the makeup chair for eight hours. We would put him on the set for forty minutes and say, 'It's a wrap.' He was a total professional about it. Even though he could have pulled a lot of star turns saying, 'I'm sick of this makeup.' Instead he would help everyone's morale. With-

out an actor of his stamina, I don't know if the movie could have come off even half as good. Off and on-screen, he was a total delight, game for anything."

Perhaps the intent of POPCORN can be best summarized by its title. It's an inexpensive confection nibbled in a darkened auditorium before a forty-foot screen filled with scenes of other lives unfolding. No doubt the generic, highly recognizable title will spur the film's sales, but what does it mean? "There were certain threads in the script that tied into the POPCORN title which didn't make the final cut," said Hurst. "We fell in love with the title as did the distributor, so it stays." Happy munching. □

Tom Villard as Toby, the film's killer, offering film students at the festival.



GATE II

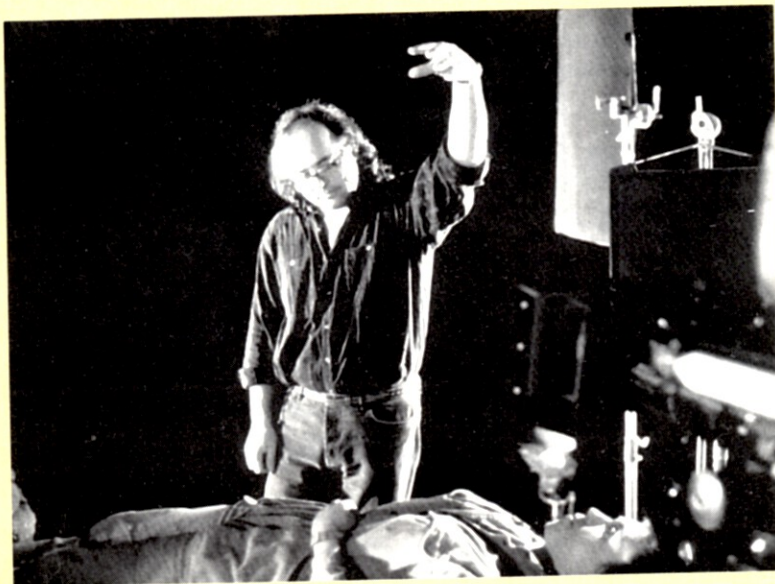
A follow-up to the Canadian horror hit that promises audiences they can go to hell.

By Gary Kimber

THE GATE surprised the film industry when it opened in May 1987 because it came within a few hundred thousand dollars of besting Columbia Pictures big-budget, high-profile ISHTAR for the number one spot at the national boxoffice. Though it's not likely that Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman will ever get to make ISHTAR II—or would want to—GATE II is set to open in early 1991 from Triumph Releasing, postponed from its scheduled release last October.

Produced by Canada's John Kemeny and Andras Hamori for Alliance Entertainment, the original film went on to win the Golden Reel Award as the top-grossing

Louis Tripp as Terry has grown up into a troubled teenage demonologist, holding a captured minion for study.



Canadian director Tibor Takacs sets up the camera placement for a Hell effects shot.

Canadian film of 1987. For GATE II, Hamori reassembled the creative team that made the first film, including Hungarian-born director Tibor Takacs, screenwriter Michael Nankin, and special effects supervisor Randy Cook. "We tried to make THE GATE we weren't able to do the last time," said Takacs. "This one has more bite to it. We wanted to put greater emotions into making more interesting characters."

Filmed in late 1988 at the Cineplex-owned Kleinberg Studios, about an hour's drive north of Toronto, Takacs had hoped his sequel would see release before last summer's other "little critters movie, GREMLINS 2" in order to avoid comparisons. It's doubtful audiences will be confused;

unlike its predecessor, GATE II doesn't feature a horde of 18" gremlins—just one.

Louis Tripp returns in the role of super-nerd Terry, who summoned the devilish gremlins in the original—dubbed "minions"—by playing heavy metal music with a satanic message. In the sequel, Tripp is not the same carefree lad. He's matured into a likable but troubled teenager whose mother has died, leaving him in the care of an alcoholic father. Using computers, Terry decides to summon up the dark forces again, this time for a little helping hand. "He solicits their power in a good way," said Takacs. "If only he could control them. Something goes horribly wrong though and Terry has to repair the damage he has

created. The bad kids who help him abuse their dark powers, and in the end must pay for their transgressions."

The film's star minion is captured by Terry and treated like a household pet, until it is stolen by one of his friends, who is bitten and turns into a monster. The minion effects come courtesy of Cook, whose low-budget work for the first film is its best recommendation. "We expand a little bit on the effects we did in part one," said Cook, an effects veteran of GHOSTBUSTERS and films like FRIGHT NIGHT. "The main minion gets to do a little more personality work. Rather than extracting entertainment

value from teeming hordes, we thought we would emphasize character—less running around, more acting. In the first one they acted as a swarm of rats or an angry throng of peasants would in an old Universal horror picture. Now we have a sole minion who is stage centre star."

The audience isn't quite meant to empathize with the antics of Cook's devilish minion. "But he's a satanic emissary so he has a certain degree of charm," said Cook, grinning. "You're not sympathetic to him because he is a villain, but a charming one, we hope. He gets his way with the kids through seduction, by convincing them he's cute, entrapping them. He plays it like a trickster, with gleeful deceit."



In Hell Terry is forced by his devilish companions to sacrifice girlfriend Pamela Segall to Satan, a rear screen stop-motion effects composite designed by effects supervisor Randy Cook. Inset: Cook animating.

Cook realized GATE II's minion, without resorting to the use of stop-motion animation, as in the first film. The minion of the sequel is played exclusively by a ballerina wearing a sixty to seventy-pound foam rubber suit, utilizing three interchangeable effects heads, weighing six to seven pounds each, providing a broader range of expression. The suit was based on Cook's original design and mechanized for radio and cable control by Steve Neill.

The demonic transformations of Terry's friends are the work of makeup artist Craig Reardon, who also worked on the first film. "I tried to get some novelty in the designs by not putting a huge pair of

“In this picture we are plunged into Hell itself,” said makeup artist Craig Reardon. “The first one set all of the devilry in a living room. Now we go where he lives.”

antlers on them,” said Reardon. “No horns at all per se. One has a cropping of barnacle-like growth on his head. I wanted to give them an alien, forbidding appearance but not take a classical form. I am attempting to allude to the idea of the devil as a dapper Spaniard with a beard and long tail. These demons have a certain reptilian aspect. I would have

liked to have had a little more time though. It's been a pressured shoot because of disorganization in the planning stage.”

Reardon said an important element of the look of the film was his contribution. “In this picture we are plunged into Hell itself,” said Reardon. “In the first one we were in a living room and the devil came home. Now we go where he lives. They were stymied on how to build Hell with pumice rock and gas jets. The whole idea of Hell as a subterranean place was stumping them. Some imagery had already been established in the script of a dank, dark ooze appearing with the minion at the start of the film. On that basis I thought of a sea where Hell itself could be discovered in the middle of a desolate, cold ocean. It was then seized upon and constitutes the look of Hell.”

Cook's stop-motion Demon

Lord, which climaxed the original, doesn't make an appearance in GATE II. Cook does provide stop-motion effects of the demons Terry's friends turn into however, including one ten-foot monster that bears a striking resemblance to the Ymir of 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH (1957), the handiwork of Cook's idol, animation master Ray Harryhausen. □

The film's star minion, a seductively devilish emissary who tempts Terry to make a Faustian bargain he regrets.



Tripp, corrupted by the powers of darkness, makeup design by Craig Reardon.



SCHWARZENEGGER

TERMINATOR 2

Writer/director James Cameron is back, but his killer robot has lost its edge.

By Frederick S. Clarke

"It can't be bargained with. It can't be reasoned with. It doesn't feel pity, or remorse, or fear. And it absolutely will not stop—ever—until you are dead."

That's the riveting description freedom fighter of the future Michael Biehn gives a frightened Linda Hamilton, to let her know what she's up against in *THE TERMINATOR*, the 1984 surprise hit that transformed the career of its writer/director, James Cameron, and its star, Arnold Schwarzenegger. But if reports emanating from the set of *TERMINATOR 2: JUDGEMENT DAY* are to be believed, Schwarzenegger may be playing a kinder, gentler Terminator for the '90s.

Behind the big-budget sequel, estimated to cost \$60 million and due for release July 4 from Tri-Star Pictures, is Carolco Productions, the company that backed Schwarzenegger on *TOTAL RECALL*. Linda Hamilton, star of television's *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, returns in the role of Sarah Connor, who carried the unborn savior of mankind in her womb at the close of the first film. Twelve-year-old Edward Furlong makes his screen debut as John Connor, the son Hamilton raises and trains for his role



Arnold Schwarzenegger as *THE TERMINATOR* in the 1984 hit that made a name for writer/director James Cameron. Schwarzenegger is back in the sequel, but now he's a good guy.

as the leader of the uprising that prevents mankind's obliteration by sentient machines. Co-starring as the new heavy is Robert Patrick, as Key 1000, the nemesis now faced by Schwarzenegger's "good" Terminator.

Carolco chief Mario Kassar, in a repeat of the scenario that saw *TOTAL RECALL* become a reality, purchased the rights to do *TERMINATOR 2* from Hemdale, which backed the original. Though *THE TERMINATOR* was a huge boxoffice hit, earning distributor Orion Pictures close to \$17 million in rentals (per *Variety*) on a slim \$6.5 million production cost, the anticipated sequel never materialized, reportedly because

Cameron never saw eye-to-eye with Hemdale chief John Daly. According to the *L.A. Times*, Kassar, the 38-year-old Beirut-born Lebanese who has come to be known as Hollywood's biggest high-roller, paid an estimated \$5 million for the sequel rights. A source close to Cameron revealed that the director and Schwarzenegger had struck a good faith agreement over the years to work together on the sequel someday.

For his part in *TERMINATOR 2*, in lieu of a salary, Kassar granted Schwarzenegger's wish to have wings with the gift of a "slightly used," per the *Times*, Gulfstream G-III luxury airplane, valued at about \$14 million. (The actor got a

reported \$10 million from Carolco for *TOTAL RECALL*.) Kassar enticed Cameron with a multi-million dollar salary, plus a development deal for Cameron's company, Lightstorm Entertainment, including an elaborate 11,000 square foot complex close to both the Burbank airport and the production offices of *TERMINATOR 2*. Future Lightstorm projects per *Variety* include *SKIMMERS*, a supernatural love story by William Wisler. Cameron also has in development *THE MINDS OF BILLY MILLIGAN*, the final film in his contract with 20th

Century-Fox for whom he made *ALIENS* and *THE ABYSS*, based on a book by Daniel Keyes, the author whose work inspired the Cliff Robertson film *CHARLY*.

Gale Anne Hurd, Cameron's former wife, who produced *THE TERMINATOR* and co-wrote its story with Cameron, is credited with Kassar as Executive producer but is not involved on the sequel. The new film's producer is B.J. Rack, the lady who rode herd for Carolco on the production of *TOTAL RECALL*'s complex special effects. Cameron hired Joseph C. Nemeck III, one of two art directors who worked on *THE ABYSS*, to design *TERMINATOR 2*, which depicts the

TOTAL RECALL

The hell of filming Mars down in Mexico.

By Bill Florence

There are some in the movie-going public who perceive that Arnold Schwarzenegger is just a body builder with boxoffice draw. That is a perception director Paul Verhoeven said he tried to dispel with **TOTAL RECALL**. "Arnold is a very charming, open guy!" said Verhoeven. "It is fun to have dinner with Arnold. With many people dinner is torture, because it's so boring. Actors are often so self-involved that it's difficult to have a normal conversation with them. There will always surface a little bit about themselves. Arnold is not like that. So I think that we tried to portray Arnold as the guy he partly is, as a normal, charming man, and a vulnerable man."

Apparently, Verhoeven's gambit worked. Though many found Arnold Schwarzenegger hard to accept as Quaid, **TOTAL RECALL**'s put-upon hero, audiences made the film one of the biggest hits of 1990, earning more than \$100 million at the boxoffice, the mark of a movie blockbuster.

For Verhoeven, propelled into Hollywood's big-budget stratosphere by the phenomenal success of **ROBOCOP** in 1987, the attraction of **TOTAL RECALL** was the subtext provided by the work of science fiction writer Philip K. Dick, whose story "We Can Remem-

ber It For You Wholesale," served as the basis for the film's script. Schwarzenegger noted that Quail, the meek-sounding name Dick gave to the story's hero, was changed to avoid having the film be the butt of jokes aimed at the country's vice president.

"I thought it was *really* interesting," said Verhoeven of the script's basis in Dick's story. "It had this strange level of the mind. It is first an action science fiction movie, but underneath that there is something else which I like very

The auteurs of **TOTAL RECALL**, the mind of director Paul Verhoeven (left), the muscle of Arnold Schwarzenegger.



Schwarzenegger's Terminator proved unstoppable in the original's fiery climax, stop-motion effects by Fantasy 2, hired to duplicate their work on the sequel.

world's nuclear annihilation on August 29, 1997, the "Judgement Day" of the title, in which three billion perish.

Four teams hired by Cameron to realize the film's ambitious special effects include a makeup crew headed by Stan Winston, who created Schwarzenegger's makeup on the original. A visual effects crew supervised by Gene Warren of Fantasy 2, will recreate the futuristic setting of mankind's war against the machines, depicting the Los Angeles of 2029 A.D. on a grand scale only hinted at in their work for the original. Unlike that film, the sequel's effects are being shot in large format Vista Vision for greater realism. Forward Productions, headed by Bob and Dennis Skotak, the latter an Oscar-winner for Cameron's **THE ABYSS**, provide miniature and mechanical effects, including those for an elaborate earthquake sequence. And

Dennis Muren of ILM, an Oscar-winner for the amazing water tentacle of **THE ABYSS**, supervises another top secret computer-generated effects *tour de force* devised by Cameron.

ILM's hush-hush effects sequence is said to involve the depiction of Patrick as Key 1000, a new, even more sophisticated assassin sent into the past by the machines to kill Conner and her son. Schwarzenegger as Cyberdyne Systems Terminator Model 101 is recreated by the human rebels and sent back to protect the boy and his mother. A trailer filmed by Cameron now promoting the sequel in theatres, shows Schwarzenegger being reforged as the Terminator at the factory, using a new endoskeleton built for the sequel by Winston, with effects by the Skotaks. A source on the set viewed the filming of a scene

continued on page 62, column 3

TOTAL RECALL

MAN BEHIND THE MUSCLE

Arnold on his love for science fiction and special effects, done Schwarzenegger-style.

By Bill Florence

Arnold Schwarzenegger, businessman, bodybuilder, actor, director, and writer, said he does not consciously seek out science fiction scripts for his acting roles. Yet a significant amount of Schwarzenegger's success in the motion picture industry has come from the genre. Schwarzenegger is currently starring in TERMINATOR 2 for Carolco, the backers of TOTAL RECALL, being directed by James Cameron.

"Somehow I get hooked on [science fiction scripts] when I read them and see the imagination in them," Schwarzenegger acknowledged. "And I certainly like them when I do them. So there must be something in me that enjoys those kinds of movies."

Schwarzenegger said he got an early indication of the film's potential when he screened the work-in-progress for Columbia studio heads Peter Guber and Jon Peters. "I wanted to draw them in and make them really feel that it is also their movie," said Schwarzenegger, the film businessman. "Although it's a Carolco picture, it's they who really have to feel it is their movie. Then they will go all out in the promotion and the marketing."

"They didn't stop screaming for a half hour after the movie was over," recalled Schwarzenegger. "Jon Peters was screaming, 'This is incredible this is better than BATMAN!' I had never heard anything like this. These guys were really all

over the place." Schwarzenegger's strategy paid off, because Columbia promoted the film heavily and saw it outdistance heavy competition last summer like DICK TRACY, ROBOCOP 2 and GREMLINS 2.

Though filming was difficult at Mexico's Churubusco Studios, Schwarzenegger remembered the shooting in a positive light. "It was total madness," he said. "We all had a good time, but it was such a technical movie. We only shot two or three times on each stage, and there were around eighty sets altogether. So it was a very rough shoot. Paul Verhoeven is a genius with tremendous energy. He works from 6 a.m. to 12 midnight and never stops. It's hard to keep up with that kind of energy and enthusiasm. Every time we shot, he demanded the ultimate performance."

Schwarzenegger's experience in Mexico might not have been so pleasant if, as Verhoeven related, Schwarzenegger had not brought his own personal

Lights, camera, action—Arnold Schwarzenegger prepares to film a scene with his holographic double as Paul Verhoeven directs a Dream Quest motion-control crew.



The actor as special effect, a puppet likeness of Arnold Schwarzenegger used to film the scene in which Quaid extracts through his nose the homing device (right) giving away his location.



cook with him. "He only got sick one time during those six months, and that was when his cook got sick and he had to eat with us," Verhoeven laughed. "I don't know if that was the reason, but he never was sick really. Arnold is probably in better health than any of the rest of us. When he did PRE-DATOR in Puerto Vallarta, he got very sick, and I think he learned his lesson."

Whenever conflict occurred between the creative forces or with the financial backers—at one point Carolco threw producer Ron Shusett off the set—Schwarzenegger stepped in to smooth things over. "There was a communication problem sometimes," said Schwarzenegger. "Since I was on good terms with everyone and understood the psychology of the people involved, and I had the goal of making the whole pro-

duction really work, I felt that I could invite them over to my trailer to talk. Instead of having a meeting in [co-executive producer] Buzz Feitshans' office or in Paul Verhoeven's office, I brought them over to the trailer and gave them some schnapps, and put on some good music. Then we would discuss how to solve the problems. Sometimes I even had the mariachi bands playing. I didn't solve the problems, they solved them."

Schwarzenegger had his first taste of directing shortly before the release of TOTAL RECALL with an episode of HBO'S TALES FROM THE CRYPT. "I had a great, great time and I felt very comfortable with directing actors," said Schwarzenegger. "I will do much more of that. Maybe next will be a full two-hour show for television, and then a movie."

Missing from TOTAL RECALL is the image of Schwarzenegger puffing on his beloved cigars. "I've toned that down much more now that I'm the chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness," said Schwarzenegger, about keeping his stogies behind-the-scenes. "I don't want to present the wrong idea. So I smoke only in private." □

“I have a kind of phobia of schizophrenia. My fear served as a handle on this movie. Action movies without a handle I cannot do. I need something to get a grip on the material.”

much, this layer that Philip Dick has in his work, a doubting of reality. Dick wrote his story with this other level, and then Dan O'Bannon and Ron Shusett fleshed it out, and finally I pushed it further, I would say.”

Verhoeven said he was well aware of the eccentric nature of the late science fiction author, whose work was filmed by Ridley Scott as *BLADE RUNNER* (1982). Some years before his death, Dick had a vision which told him the Second Coming of the messiah was imminent. “He thought Christ would appear in Belgium,” noted Verhoeven. “I don't know if he ever got there. In his last couple of years, Dick was preparing for this Second Coming. So there is a mystical

sense about Philip Dick, and there's a mystical quality to his work. He tries to undermine your sense of reality. I think that's partly the feeling of the movie. I like that very much.”

Verhoeven said the psychological underpinnings of *TOTAL RECALL* touched a chord deep within him. “I have a kind of fear of psychosis, of schizophrenia,” noted Verhoeven. “Everybody has a phobia. That is mine. When I go mad, it will probably be schizophrenia. I won't become neurotic. I will be more psychotic. Of course, I have a strong sense of reality, but philosophically I still think that reality could probably change in front of my eyes. I have the feeling that that is a possibility in life, although it is



The red light district of Mars's Venusville, expansive sets envisioned by production designer William Sandell and built on the stages of Mexico's Churubusco Studios.

not occurring. Is reality real? Is our life a dream? And are we a part of somebody else's dream? These philosophical issues are, on a certain level, available in the movie, without being prominent. My fear of psychosis served as a handle on this movie. Action movies without a handle, I cannot do. I need something for myself to get a grip on the material.”

Verhoeven worked on the script with writer Gary Gold-

man, expanding on Dick's ideas in an attempt to come up with an ending that worked. In fifteen years of development, producer and co-scripter Ron Shusett had failed to come up with a climax that satisfied. “I had the feeling that the third act was not really resolved,” said Verhoeven. “The basic issue of the movie is a mind construction: what is real and what isn't? But the last act was more or less all action: the

ALIEN'S STEPCHILD: THE 15 YEAR SAGA

The fifteen-year-long saga of filming *TOTAL RECALL* has its roots embedded in irony. When producer Ron Shusett met with Dan O'Bannon in 1974 to discuss story concepts each had been toying with, Shusett offered his idea for *TOTAL RECALL* and O'Bannon offered his concept for *ALIEN*. While O'Bannon liked Shusett's idea, the latter did not think much of *ALIEN*, so the two writers shelved what would one day become a modern icon of science fiction and concentrated on the development of *TOTAL RECALL*. “I thought it was just a good B-movie,” said Shusett of O'Bannon's *ALIEN*, “which showed a lack of vision on my part.”

Shusett came up with the *TOTAL RECALL* title, judging Philip K. Dick's “We Can Remember It For You Wholesale” too “silly” to be taken seriously. But once Dick's story was exhausted—making up the first third of the script—



TOTAL RECALL co-scripter Dan O'Bannon, circa 1975.

both adaptors foundered in coming up with a direction for the story to take. They turned their attention back to *ALIEN*.

“Dan told me, ‘*ALIEN* is just a simple monster movie which needs a brand-new inspirational idea,’” said Shusett. “It will fall right into place, if we can come up with a simple way of making the monster amazing with a special effect.” At the time, O'Bannon

was broke and sleeping on Shusett's couch after a disastrous six-month stint in Paris, working on Alejandro Jodorowsky's failed attempt to film *DUNE*.

“I woke him up in the middle of the night,” recalled Shusett. “I said, ‘Dan, I have the idea. I know what the monster does.’ He said, ‘What?’ I said, ‘The monster screws the human being. It plants the seed, grows and emerges from the body of the human—a hybrid monster. It's in there, and we don't know until it comes out and escapes in the ship, and all dur-

ing the movie, it's chasing them and changing into different forms.’ Just that quickly, the story fell into place. Dan said, ‘My God, that's it, nobody's ever seen anything like that!’ We had a whole story outline in three weeks.”

The rest, as they say, is history. *TOTAL RECALL*, however, never quite fell into place. Shusett and O'Bannon continued to work on the script, but never licked the problem of how to end the film, leading O'Bannon to drop out (see sidebar, page 20). Shusett, however, stuck doggedly with the project. “I was obsessed with it,” said Shusett. “If I didn't do it, I felt that maybe *ALIEN* would be considered a fluke.”

The success of *ALIEN* won Shusett a development deal on *TOTAL RECALL* at Disney in 1981, but Disney executives could not agree on how to change the film's weak third act. Producer Dino DeLaurentiis picked up the option to make the film, but also failed to lick the script with a succession of directors that included Richard Rush, David Cronenberg, Lewis Teague and Bruce Beresford.

Bill Florence

mind level was gone. There was nothing happening any more on that other, psychological level. What Goldman came up with was to give the third act a twist. We find out that Quaid's alter ego, the person he was before, was an asshole."

Shusett said he felt this added element "raised the film to a new level of brilliance it never had before." But Shusett objected to another change made by Verhoeven, dropping the suspense of the ticking clock as Coahaagen (Ronny Cox) cuts off the air supply to the Martian colony. Verhoeven said he found the idea too melodramatic. "My feeling was that it was too much of a side issue," recalled Verhoeven. "The people that were threatened would not be well enough known for the audience to care about. Shutting off the air doesn't affect our main people much—it doesn't affect Quaid, and it doesn't affect Melina [Rachel Ticotin]. I had the feeling it would not work because it would not be emotional enough, or it would be superfluous. That was the dispute."

Shusett found a powerful ally in Schwarzenegger, who insisted that Coahaagen's action of cutting off the air supply be reinserted in the script. "I felt there should be a cause to Quaid," said Schwarzenegger. "There should be an urgency to the mission. I feel that movies

Schwarzenegger's Quaid, takes a licking but keeps on ticking, not believable as the film's put upon hero per O'Bannon.



TOTAL RECALL

DAN O'BANNON ON WHY IT DOESN'T WORK

A critique of the film and of filmmaking from its original screenwriter-turned-director.

By Carl Brandon

Dan O'Bannon, the original screenwriter of TOTAL RECALL, has been one of the most important and prolific horror and science fiction screenwriters of the '80s. His credits include DARK STAR (1974), ALIEN (1978), HEAVY METAL (1981), BLUE THUNDER (1983), LIFE-FORCE (1985), and INVADERS FROM MARS (1986). O'Bannon has been largely inactive since writing and directing RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD in 1984, a commercial hit that proved to be an unpleasant creative experience for him. Credited as one of three co-authors of TOTAL RECALL, O'Bannon originally wrote the script for producer Ron Shusett back in 1975, before they went on to collaborate on ALIEN, basing it on a story by science fiction master Philip K. Dick called "I Can Remember It For You Wholesale."

It's an indication of Hollywood's lack of regard for writers that Dick's name is misspelled in credits of TOTAL RECALL. Unlike the film that was eventually made, O'Bannon said his original script was more respectful of Dick's source material. "I thought that novelty and surprise were some of the main virtues of the story," said O'Bannon, of Dick's story, whose hero is dubbed a more timid-sounding Douglas Quail. "In the story [the hero] is, or thinks he is, a very ordinary, non-assertive kind of fella. It should be much



O'Bannon, directing RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD in 1984, an experience that led him to give up the filmmaking grind until recently.

more of a surprise that he turns out to be the most deadly secret agent in the universe. The part required an actor who could have gone both ways more readily. [Arnold] Schwarzenegger cannot diminish himself enough to be a milquetoast."

O'Bannon later worked with Dick himself shortly before he died in 1982 on DRAGON'S TEETH, an unfiled adaptation of Dick's story "Second Variety," featuring a concept very similar to THE TERMINATOR, though predating it by several years. And O'Bannon said he was already well-versed in Dick's oeuvre when Shusett first raised the idea of adapting him for the movies.

Recalled O'Bannon, "Ronny Shusett walked into my apartment sporting a filthy old xerox copy of Dick's 'We Can Remember It For You Whole-

sale.' He said, 'Dan, I was wondering if you'd take a look at this story and tell me if you think this would make a good movie.' I said, 'I know that story and I think it would make a terrific movie.' That's how it started."

O'Bannon said he began work on the script for Shusett immediately. "Ronny lent me that copy and the next time he came over, a couple of days later, I handed him thirty pages of script," recalled O'Bannon. "Boy, was I green. You don't do that until you have an agreement on paper, but I did. I was running on enthusiasm, sheer enthusiasm."

In thirty pages, O'Bannon had exhausted the plot of Dick's story. "Dick's story is short," said O'Bannon. "It ends very abruptly. You cannot take that particular story and simply inflate it up to a full-length piece like a balloon. In my evaluation, it was a first act, which means you have to invent the other two acts. Shusett liked what I did and asked, 'Where does it go from here?' I said, 'We take him to Mars.'"

But expanding on Dick is something the screenwriters never succeeded at, though O'Bannon favors his draft over the one filmed, in which Mars gets terraformed in two minutes flat, an idea contributed by Shusett's former writing partner Steve Pressfield. Instead of O'Bannon's more thematically integral wrap-up, Shusett and the filmmakers strove for the suspense of Schwarzenegger gasping for



Ludicrous Rob Bottin effects puppets of Ronny Cox (left) and Schwarzenegger (right) gasp for air after Quaid and Coahaagen are ejected onto the airless Martian surface, an ending O'Bannon called "lame."

air on the Martian surface.

"Shuset and I never saw eye-to-eye on the end of the movie," said O'Bannon. "Ultimately, it was one of the reasons that we parted on this project. The end that they filmed, in my estimation, is lame. It lacks impact because it has no meaning. The fact that it's spectacular doesn't mean anything. So what? Who cares? Is this movie called AIR? Is this movie called PRESSURE? No, this movie is called TOTAL RECALL. The end of this movie should have been the final, stunning revelation about [the hero's] identity as recalled by him."

In O'Bannon's script, Dick's hero, dubbed Quaid in the movie, returns to Mars to put his hand on the controls of an alien machine which O'Bannon envisioned inside a Martian pyramid, also seen in Quaid's opening dream of

“The film’s ending is lame. It lacks impact because it has no meaning. The ending should have been the final, stunning revelation about the hero’s identity, as recalled by him.”

Mars in O'Bannon's draft. Strangely enough, though the pyramid is not seen in the final film, its graphic was a prominent part of the film's poster art. In the film, Quaid places his hand into the impression left by a three-fingered alien appendage, somewhat inexplicably activating the apparatus.

"That wasn't supposed to have been a three-fingered Martian handprint," said O'Bannon. "That was supposed to have been a print of [Quaid's] hand which matched only his hand. Quaid, Earth's

top secret agent, went to Mars and entered this compound. The machine killed him and created a synthetic duplicate. He is that synthetic duplicate. He cannot be killed because he can anticipate danger before it happens. He is also omnipotent. Because he is omnipotent and because he cannot be killed, Earth wants to kill him but cannot. That's why they go to all this trouble to erase his brain to make him think he's nobody. It's the only way they can control him.

"Audiences don't question it when movie heroes go through adventures and don't get killed. I thought it was clever to actually have a reason for it. At the end of the picture, Quaid puts his hand on the device and it all comes back to him, who he really is. His total recall of his identity is that he is a creation of a Martian machine. He is, in effect, a resurrection of the Martian race in a synthetic body. He turns and says to all the other characters, 'It's going to be fun to play God.'"

O'Bannon referred to the film's ending, shots of Rob Bottin's laughably grotesque makeup effects of a Schwarzenegger dummy, eyes bulging

and head all but exploding under the effect of Mars' lack of atmosphere, as "a giant pimple." Said O'Bannon, "They thought that was more exciting. Squeeze that mound. I didn't even know about the ending until I saw the movie. I wouldn't have minded that they changed my ending, I just don't think what they arrived at had any emotional impact at all. It wasn't really where the audiences' concern had been led to be."

O'Bannon added that his script also emphasized that Mars was a virtually airless planet, but outside O'Bannon's domed cities it was not only airless, but also three hundred degrees below zero. O'Bannon noted how the film's ending is too similar to the idea of the planet-transforming Genesis machine of STAR TREK II, which was at least strikingly visualized.

Unlike ALIEN, O'Bannon said he conceived of TOTAL RECALL from the very beginning as an expensive movie, written in the mold of a James Bond adventure, a quality that still comes through in the finished film. "I thought part of the fun of this movie would be in envisioning it on a grand scale. I was partly inspired by the early James Bond movies, like GOLDFINGER, an era that I loved so much. I wouldn't have wanted to see THUNDERBALL and GOLDFINGER done on a little, cheap basis either. I was writing this as a science fiction James Bond

Schwarzenegger activates the alien terraforming device, though his hand doesn't quite fit (inset). In O'Bannon's script, the handprint on a different kind of alien device turned out to be Quaid's own.



movie with the additional element of imagination. I don't think I would have been so interested in writing it if it had been a low-budget film. There are certain stories that I think are appropriate and I am willing to do on a low budget and there are certain projects that I would leave on the shelf rather than try to shoot cheap."

Other screenwriters refined the film's action slant after O'Bannon left the project. "Some of the details are different," said O'Bannon of the final film. "I don't know if I would have put as much energy into the x-ray booth on the subway. I might have spent that time and money elsewhere."

Despite the project's admitted Bond parallels, O'Bannon said he's especially proud of grounding the script squarely in the science fiction genre. "This movie is something very rare," said O'Bannon. "It is an actual science fiction movie. Far and away the majority of most science fiction movies are really something else in disguise. It could be a cowboy movie or an adventure movie or a monster movie or something else. ALIEN is a monster movie. But this is an actual science fiction movie because it depends utterly on the imaginative quality. You couldn't tell this story otherwise."

How would O'Bannon have done TOTAL RECALL differently, had he produced and directed it? O'Bannon said he would have "scraped away at all of [director Paul] Verhoeven's squibs, cut down the volume of the soundtrack mix by half or two-thirds so you don't get hearing loss, cast somebody else as Quaid, and done a proper ending. Then I think you could have had a pretty decent picture."

O'Bannon comes down especially hard on the film's high violence quotient, an embellishment not in his script. Noted O'Bannon, "What Verhoeven said when they've been nailing him on [the violence]—he said it on television when they asked him about it recently—he said, 'Well, as a child in Holland I saw Nazi atrocities, so I don't take these things seriously on screen.' But Paul, it doesn't matter whether you take them seriously, it's what

O'BANNON ON VIOLENCE

"It's bothersome to see excessive violence. It's raw sensation at the expense of everything else. Where is the impact? One killing has impact. Fifty is like rain, why bother?"



Schwarzenegger blasts four would-be assassins, excessive violence decried by O'Bannon who said his script had a reason for Quaid's surprising invulnerability.

the audience thinks. If all you think about it is what I, as the director take seriously, you've spent \$60 million for a home movie?! His judgement is obviously way off the norm. Because of the horrors he had to experience as a child, he's now reached a point of psychic numbing to where this kind of violence doesn't mean anything to him. But it still means something to an audience. It's bothersome to see that. It's raw sensation at the expense of everything else. Where is the impact? One killing has impact; fifty is like, why bother? It's like rain."

O'Bannon is not afraid of disturbing audiences, as the chest-burster scene he wrote in ALIEN demonstrates. It's not surprising to O'Bannon that multiplying the menace in ALIENS wasn't as effective as the single alien of the original. O'Bannon said he believes in the old-fashioned virtues of character building to increase audience involvement in a story, exploring interesting and way-out ideas, but doing so logically.

As both a writer and a director, O'Bannon said he is now poised to make his mark on the

film scene once more. He is currently directing SHATTERBRAIN in Canada, for Scotti Bros. release, a horror-thriller written by Brent V. Friedman, based on a story by H. P. Lovecraft, about a man who discovers an ancient means of raising the dead. The mega-success of TOTAL RECALL at the boxoffice has aided O'Bannon's re-emergence on the film scene, but was a coincidence that he said did not spur the timing of his comeback.

"I had some pretty glorious ideas about what it would be like to direct and they weren't realized," said O'Bannon. "It was simply difficult, very, very difficult. It ground me down. When I walked off [RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD] very exhausted, I said to myself, 'Is this what it's going to be like every time I direct a movie? Like I've been running a gauntlet?'"

"Up until then, all my focus had been on result. I only cared about one thing—I cared about what went on that screen. Everything else was secondary to me—I would sacrifice everything—human relations, my own health—to get

what was on the screen the way I wanted it so that what was there would be flawless. But it wasn't flawless. Even though I'd sacrificed everything, it was still flawed. My private life was a shambles and the films were still flawed. What was I getting?"

"So I went home to crash after making RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD. I unplugged the phone, just shut off the outside world, and I said, 'Stop!' I shut my career down completely. My advisors were pretty upset because that was just about when things were starting to cook for me. I could have gone from one picture to the next. But the greatest invention of the twentieth century is the unpluggable phone. If you want to shut people out, you can do it. So I did, professionally at least. I went very deep into myself, and one of the things I thought about was this business of result versus process."

"It takes a long time to make a movie and even if it's going to be some kind of big hit, you get two weeks of glory every two years. That's not very much. I decided that it seemed to me that the process was more important, I wanted the process of directing to be in itself enjoyable, pleasurable. Otherwise it wasn't worth it. Otherwise, it was just self-torment."

"I decided it was time to re-evaluate everything, everything I'd been promising myself my entire life, to pull together my private life, my relationships, my personality, now was the time. Because if not now, then when? When I was eighty? When I have six months left to enjoy myself? That's what I've been doing for five years. I've been very quiet, very out of things, turning down offers, evaluating them very carefully. I got married, which was the best thing I've ever done in my life. In my marriage I get something back for the effort I put out. The film industry is a lot like throwing silver dollars into a void. You don't get a lot back for what you put in. You have put out more than you get. It's frustrating."

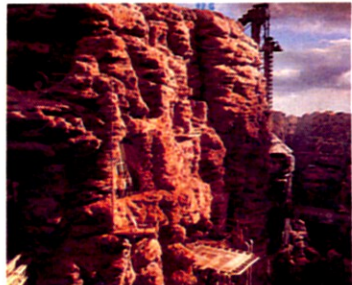
"So earlier this year I began to think maybe I was feeling good enough that I was willing to go out and stick my face in the buzzsaw again." □



Illustrator Steve Burg's design for Quaid and Melina's final view of a terraformed Mars. Inset: Rachel Ticotin and Schwarzenegger kiss after catching their breath.



Left: Burg's design for a dramatic camera pullback through Venusville Canyon that leads up to the film's happy coda. Right: The composite effect as seen on the film, realized by Dream Quest. Beginning with a shot of Venusville survivors looking out into the Canyon, front projected into the miniature, the camera pulls back to reveal a matte painted sky.



do really well when the audience can relate to an emergency. That's why there are titles like 48 HOURS. Such films have a great impact. People know that in 48 hours, something has to happen. In any movie that starts out telling you there's a deadline, it makes you sit much more on the edge of the seat. In the script meetings, I expressed that I felt there was something

missing, that something had to be bigger than me just finding out that I'm there to save Mars."

Ultimately Verhoeven said he came to see the logic of Schwarzenegger's position. "Ron and Arnold felt so strongly about it that I thought, 'Well, maybe I'm wrong,'" recalled Verhoeven. "And they convinced Gary to bring that part of the script back in again. I said to myself, 'I'm the director, not the writer, and if they feel that it is dramatic and makes the film better, then I will go with it.'"

But there was still the problem of the anonymous nature

Dream Quest's Mars composite of Quaid's opening nightmare sequence in which he dreams of suffocating (inset), presaging the film's suspense climax.



of the Martian citizens who would be affected by Cohagen's action. "We started to make these people more identifiable," said Verhoeven. "That's how we solved it. And I think [Shuset and Schwarzenegger] were right: Seeing the movie now, I think it is better to have it included."

The violence in Verhoeven's TOTAL RECALL was found by many to be excessive. Though Goldman added many violent touches to Verhoeven's script, such as the scene where Richter (Michael Ironside) has his arms shorn off by an elevator in his climactic fight with Quaid, Verhoeven said he actually tried to tone down the violence. "I'm always violent in my movies," said Verhoeven. "I like violent effects. When I get to the violent scenes, I get carried away. So I have to restrict myself a little bit, especially in a movie like this, where the tone is a little bit lighter." Trims included Schwarzenegger batting an assailant with a spike on the end of a Rekall chair armrest, and spurting blood when another assailant is crushed by the "Mole."

Verhoeven said his penchant for violence is not some-

thing he can get away from easily. "My fantasies and my nightmares start to fill in when I'm shooting violence," explained Verhoeven. "I am not sure why. I've always thought it has something to do with my background. I grew up in Amsterdam in what was then occupied Holland, which was continually bombed, and we were always afraid for our lives. Violence was so much a

Lycia Naff as one of the more appealing mutants of Venusville, sporting a Rob Bottin prosthetic rubber false front.



TOTAL RECALL

DREAM QUEST VISUAL EFFECTS

The effects experts of Simi Valley provided the movie with over one hundred opticals.

By Bill Florence

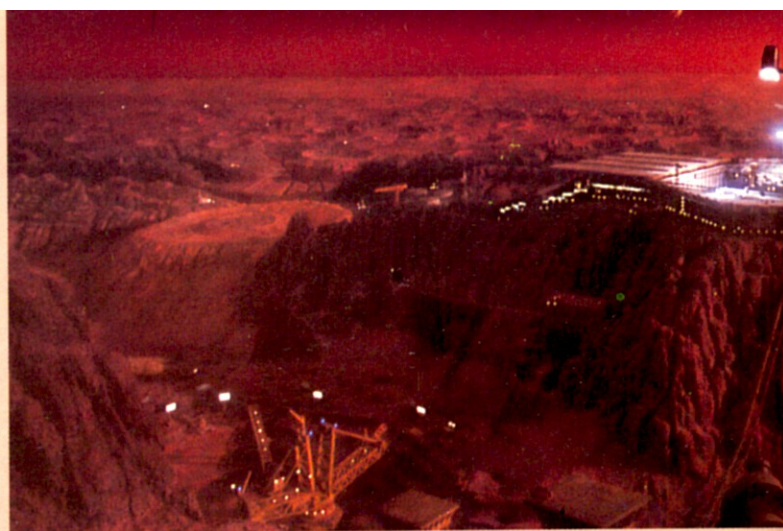
To create the extensive special visual effects of TOTAL RECALL, director Paul Verhoeven selected Dream Quest Images, whose credits include the Oscar-winning work of James Cameron's THE ABYSS. The choice to go with Dream Quest, located in Simi Valley, northwest of Los Angeles, was, according to Verhoeven, "A budget decision. We got several bids, and theirs seemed to be the bid that was less expensive than the others and still promised more."

Mused Verhoeven about the economics of effects filmmaking, "In retrospect, I would say it wouldn't have mattered who we chose. I think we would have come to the same price with all the companies. We could get bids for \$2 million, and all of them would have ended up costing \$6 or \$7 million. That's my feeling. The more quality you want, the more money it costs. If you accept every shot [they give you], and you say, 'Well, matte

lines, who cares,' the cost is less. But if you want shots to look good, then I think the prices of the special effects houses are the same, more or less. So choosing Dream Quest on the basis of money was nonsense. I think they did a really great job, artistically and technically, so I think it was a good choice."

Dream Quest provided more than one hundred optical effects shots for TOTAL RECALL, supervised by Eric Brevig, who left the company shortly after the film was completed to go to work for ILM. Brevig noted that a certain amount of artistic license was taken in visualizing the terraforming of Mars in a matter of minutes.

"If you think about that visually, it can look very fake," said Brevig. "You certainly would never see a sky go from red to blue in one shot, and it would probably take a couple of days, no matter how big this venting of atmosphere was, for it to spread out at that level. Otherwise, the reactor's got to be so



Quaid lands on Mars, a motion-control shot of the Mars shuttle composited with a miniature of Mars Port complete with foreground live action. Right: Dream Quest effects technician Michael Talarico with the model built by Stetson Visual Services.

powerful that it would kill everybody in sight. Sure, a lot of artistic license had to be taken there."

But not *just* there. Mars, like the moon, has less gravity than Earth, but you can't have an exciting chase between two people who are moving very slowly. Nor would people explode if they went outside on the surface of Mars, as Cohagen does in the film. Instead, they would suffocate. "But Paul [Verhoeven] wanted exploding people!" Brevig laughed. Mars' two moons are also depicted without scientific accuracy. Said Brevig of Verhoeven's approach, "It's more what looked visually pleasing."

Brevig is especially proud of Dream Quest's motion-control and miniature work on the Kuato mind probe sequence, a dizzying ninety-second camera move through the ancient terraforming reactor. Brevig coordinated a team of ten motion-control supervisors and technicians shooting on five different motion-control

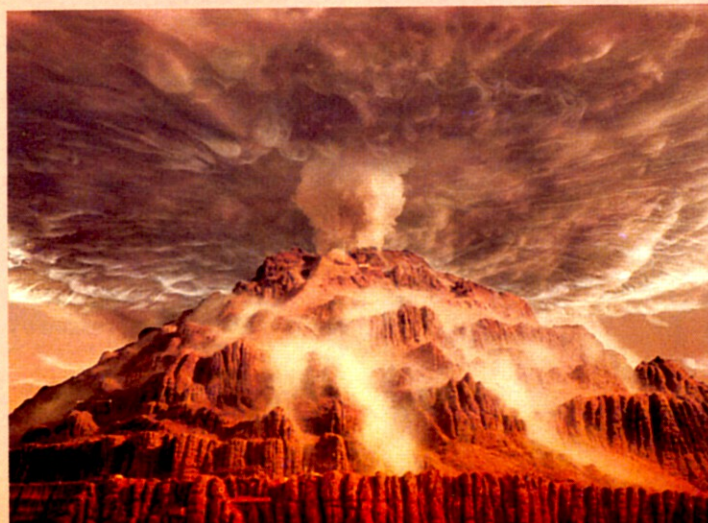
stages simultaneously.

"The scale of that shot was huge," said Brevig. "It was very difficult to hide all the lighting and the camera, especially when you look in all directions during the course of one shot." Complicating the shooting was the need for live-action shots of actors interspersed throughout the reactor journey. "In reality, there are several handoffs within the shot to some different scale models, and then back to the live-action shots," said Brevig.

Dream Quest shot at slow speeds, up to ten seconds per frame to get good realistic depth of field on the miniatures and built a special camera rig with a base nearly twenty-feet wide for freedom of movement. An arm extended camera movement an additional twenty feet, with a maneuverable boom arm capable of further extension. "It was like flying the Goodyear blimp through a supermarket, trying not to knock anything down but still maneuver," said Brevig of the filming. "We shot the mind probe sequence on its side, so that the camera could fly in, fly down, go over the bridge, down into a hole, maneuver around, and look straight back."

Brevig noted that Verhoeven was "a lot of fun to work with. My challenge was to adapt the sort of technical requirements of my way of working to his style and his ideas. It was nice because we could have a lot of give and take and collaborate. In some cases he didn't know what we could do in terms of

The Martian volcano cum alien planet transforming device spews life-giving oxygen into the Martian atmosphere. Below: Stetson modelmakers at work.



VERHOEVEN ON EFFECTS

“If you want shots to look good, then I think the prices of the special effects houses are the same. If you accept every shot and say, ‘Matte lines, who cares?’ then the cost is less.”

part of my real world. Living in a country where houses directly in front of you are burning, you walk down the street and see people being killed, and if you are three or four or five years old and see these things happening, I think some part of your brain is kind of deformed, because you think such violence is normal. But I tried, in accordance with what is right for this movie, to make sure the violence is as close to the style of the rest of the movie as possible.” Verhoeven smiled. “The MPAA helped me.”

Verhoeven said he follows a philosophy in film directing. “A director should not be too sure of himself,” declared Verhoeven. “He should always think in a dialectic way, if he can. It is much more powerful as an artist, or whatever one is as a director, to think dialectically, to think of a thesis, as well as an antithesis, and then try to create a synthesis. That’s dialectics. That’s what a good director tries to do, and that’s why I don’t mind if people are hammering around, speaking their voice.”

Verhoeven had ample opportunity to put his directorial philosophy in practice on TOTAL

RECALL, as long as producer and co-screenwriter Ron Shusett was present on the set. Shusett repeatedly made his opinions known when Carolco requested that Verhoeven make budget cuts during filming (see sidebar, page 29). “It drove me crazy,” said Verhoeven of the behind-the-scenes politics. “I started to yell and scream and kick around, not physically, but mentally. Then 24 hours later, or the next morning, I would go to [director of photography] Jost Vocado, for example, because I always had breakfast with Jost, and I’d say, ‘What do you think about [Shusett’s remarks]?’ And I would start to work on it. So I don’t mind. Yeah, I’m emotional. I start to yell and scream, and Carolco thought that was bad, but it wasn’t.”

Verhoeven scoffed at reports that TOTAL RECALL cost upwards of \$60 million. (Some put the actual tab as high as \$73 million). “I don’t believe that,” he stated emphatically. “I think it’s \$49 million. When I started to shoot, the budget was \$43 million. Projected into the future; I think we went up probably 15 percent, which is another \$6 million. So I added



Mel Johnson as Benny the cabdriver, a mutant who betrays the Mars rebels, makeup arm designed by Rob Bottin.

about \$6 million to the budget, because I was either too slow or because it was more difficult than I thought it would be. The special effects, too, were more difficult and more time consuming than we had thought. Perhaps when it’s finished, it might be \$50 million. Working in Mexico is extremely inexpensive. This movie would have been probably \$65 or \$70 million if we had shot in Los Angeles.”

Whatever the final cost, Verhoeven is certain that every penny was necessary to make TOTAL RECALL what it is. “There is no way this film could have been done cheaper or better or in less time . . . at least, I

special effects, or he had an idea that was too safe. There were several instances in post-production, when he said to me, “I didn’t believe you would pull it off. This looks great, this really works. If I’d known this was going to work during shooting, I would have done much more.” I think in the beginning Paul had some doubts about the things that could be done, and over the post-production period, he has seen, to his delight, that every thing we said we were going to do is happening.”

Brevig said he liked the challenge of working on TOTAL RECALL. “It’s always difficult to do atmospheric effects, explosions, vapor effects and the like, in miniature,” said Brevig. “We’ve really taken a lot of chances trying to shoot them on as big a scale as is practical, but that’s still much too small for them to look great, if you just shoot them normally. So, by a cunning use of lighting and editing and so forth, we are hoping that the shots that are really gutsy will hold up well in the final composite. We’ve taken a lot of risks. A lot of our work is stuff that is right on the cutting edge of being impossible to pull off.” □

Left: The Mole as it arrived in Mexico City for filming. Right: The finished prop after a hasty three days of revamping on the spot. Inset: As seen in action with Schwarzenegger.



Assistant art director Jonathan McInstry supervised the rebuilding by Bob Gould’s set decorating department from designs by Steve Burg, removing the vehicle’s side treads.



TOTAL RECALL

THE BIZARRE MARS OF DAVID CRONENBERG

The vision of Canada's horror auteur clashed with that of producer Dino DeLaurentiis.

By Bill Florence

David Cronenberg, well-known director on the horror/science fiction scene, was one of many who *might* have directed TOTAL RECALL but didn't. It was late in 1984 that Dino DeLaurentiis' DEG company brought in Cronenberg, whose involvement subsequently attracted actor

Richard Dreyfuss for the role of Quaid. Cronenberg was handed a script written by Dan O'Bannon and Ron Shusett that was much like the one Paul Verhoeven would eventually film, minus a few significant changes—Shusett was still having problems with the script's third act—and many less important ones.

The script centered on a strong, forceful leading man and included some tough action and fight scenes, which gave Dreyfuss cause for concern. The actor felt that, if he was going to play Quaid, the character would have to be rewritten so that he would narrowly escape his predicaments instead of bulldozing his way through. The character, insisted Dreyfuss, should depend on his wits and cleverness, and barely get out of each situation with his life.

Cronenberg went to work

Production artist Ron Miller's early concept of a steel earthworm called the "Sandsub."



Cronenberg (l) had cast Richard Dreyfuss (r) as Quaid.

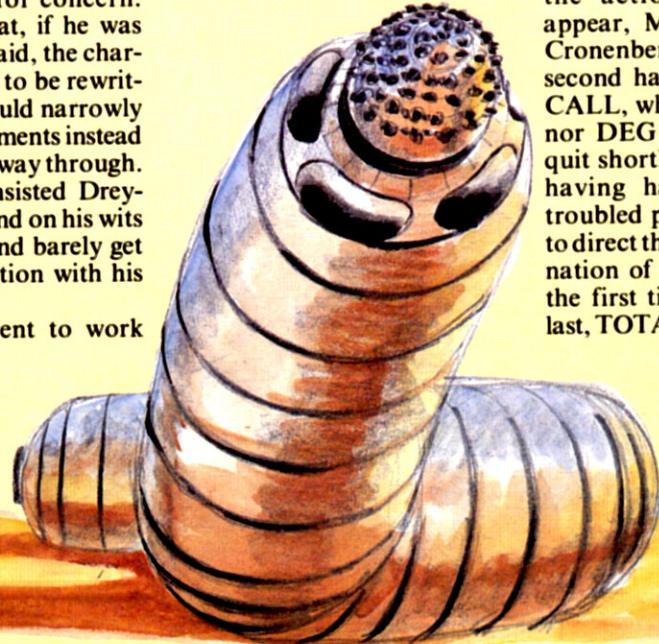
on the script, changing the main character in accordance with Dreyfuss' wishes and his own. The new Quaid used resourcefulness and courage, never overpowering anybody, never shooting or punching. In terms of plot structure, the first half of the Cronenberg rewrite remained roughly what it had been all along, but the second half took off in another direction entirely. The third act in particular was altered by Cronenberg to explore intellectual

and moral choices, instead of unthinking action. It was Cronenberg who introduced the idea that Quaid should discover that he does not want to go back to his real identity, an idea that survived all successive rewrites. The emphasis in the Cronenberg version switched from the heroic to the human, as Quaid comes to realize

he does not want to be the cold EIA agent he has been.

"This change gave the third act an interesting twist," remarked Shusett. "It seemed to help the third act considerably." It did not help to sell the script, however. MGM, which was DEG's distributor at the time, balked, judging the Cronenberg version as too intellectual. MGM demanded a return to a more heroic and visually exciting script, but when an actor more suited to the action part failed to appear, MGM dropped out. Cronenberg then wrote a new second half for TOTAL RECALL, which neither Shusett nor DEG liked. The director quit shortly thereafter, finally having had enough of the troubled project, and went on to direct the successful reincarnation of THE FLY. Not for the first time and not for the last, TOTAL RECALL ground

In the failed Dino De Laurentiis production, Quaid and Melina go by sub to a huge alien sphynx or pyramid.



Rob Bottin's rubbery puppet Quato, originally envisioned by Cronenberg in his script as a seer called The Oracle.

couldn't have done it better," said Verhoeven. "I thought this was the [budget] level we needed to make it work, and I still feel that way. I felt a responsibility to get that \$50 million on the screen; and I think the money *is* on the screen.

"I don't mind making a picture for \$500,000 instead of \$50 million," added Verhoeven referring to his Dutch films. "I made THE 4TH MAN for \$8-or-\$900,000. SOLDIER OF ORANGE, which was a really big movie, cost \$2 million. Yet you see a really big canvas of things happening there; it looks like \$30 million. I could do that in Holland because I had all the cooperation of the military and the royal family. For TOTAL RECALL we had to pay, and we had to build, and we had to make. There was no way it could have been made cheaper."

Everyone who worked on TOTAL RECALL in Mexico feels the same on one point: shooting there was hell. The health situation was so grim that every day of the production, which involved nearly 300 people, an average of thirty fell ill—some to the point where work was impossible. Montezuma was having his revenge. "If you get sick, everything becomes even more difficult, making the next step is difficult," said Verhoeven. "It is

to a halt.

"Cronenberg quit for a number of reasons," said Shusett. "First of all, he and I were having a number of creative disagreements, which started about the time of Dreyfuss' involvement, because DEG didn't want to do it as it was written for Dreyfuss. We didn't have a script to fit another actor, so Cronenberg started to feel that the movie should take on a whole *new* approach, different than either of the previous ones. I disagreed with him. I wanted to go either with our earlier approach, which was partly pride of authorship—I was in love with it—or I wanted to go with the second approach, with was the one Dreyfuss, Cronenberg and I had evolved. But suddenly David was against his own ideas." Shusett added, "We parted great friends." Cronenberg declined to be interviewed about his stint on Mars.

It does not take long to see the difference in tone between the Cronenberg version of the script and the final version developed by director Paul Verhoeven and writer Gary Goldman. Quaid easily disarms his EIA "wife" at the beginning of Cronenberg's script rather than engaging in the intense and protracted pitched battle that was filmed. In Cronenberg's draft there is no lengthy and violent chase sequence in the subway station. The action of the Johnny Cab pursuit sequence of Verhoeven's version is absent. And with Quaid disguised as an old woman, the excitement of Verhoeven's Mars Port scene is virtually nonexistent.

Once on Mars, the plot of Cronenberg's version begins to diverge to a much greater degree from later rewrites. The Mars Hilton has been taken over by the EIA and serves as Coahaagen's home. Quaid takes a cab driven by Benny (a young Oriental in this version) to the cab depot, where he finds Melina, the chief cabbie. She gives him a job as a cab driver, and he quickly avails himself of his own transportation to visit Quato, a memory manipulator. As in the film, Quato has a malformed head growing out of his body, a concept devised by Cronenberg which he called



Production illustrator Ron Miller's concept of Cronenberg's "Ganzibulls," mutations found in the sewers of Mars beneath Venusville which evolved from the camels used as pack animals.



"In the original script Martian colonists used camels as pack animals. Cronenberg elaborated on the camels idea by having monsters in the sewers be mutant camels."

the "Oracle." The Oracle kills Quato and itself in an effort to bring Quaid's secret past to light.

Quaid next visits Pintaldi, a face changer, whose manipulations of Quaid's facial structure reveals—to his utter surprise—that he is Chairman Mandrell, dictator of Earth. Pintaldi's masseuse becomes Quaid's first victim, after her assassination attempt is foiled by his hologram watch.

Quaid (now Mandrell) confronts Coahaagen, who convinces him that the Mars Fed—not the EIA—suppressed his true identity. Coahaagen convinces Mandrell that he

must infiltrate the Mars Fed and bring back its leader, Van Rindt, and gives Mandrell a signal generator to track his location. When the generator explodes—meant to kill Mandrell, but killing Benny the cabdriver instead—Mandrell returns to the cab depot, where an EIA doctor tries to convince him he's dreaming, a scene almost exactly like the final film's Dr. Edgemar sequence.

Melina turns out to be a double agent for the Mars Fed and helps Mandrell escape from the EIA, leading him to Van Rindt. The Mars leader helps Mandrell see that Coaha-

gen wants him dead, and convinces him to assist in the overthrow of the EIA on Mars.

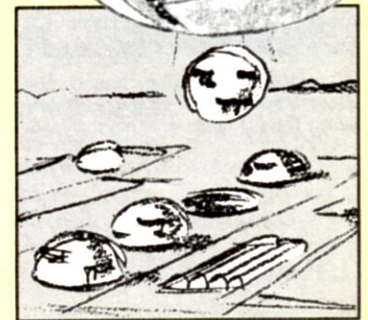
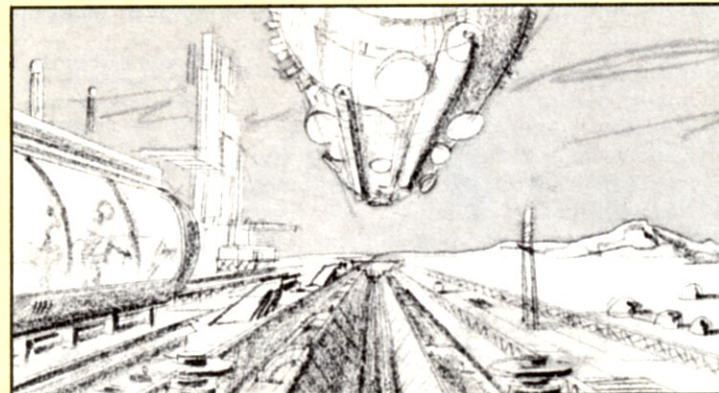
In the climax of Cronenberg's script, Mandrell and Coahaagen find themselves alone on a robot-controlled tour bus, moving over the Martian desert. Coahaagen reveals that Mandrell never really existed, that Quaid is just a minor government functionary selected to fill the role of chairman. Coahaagen planned to take over, using Quaid's Mandrell image.

The two engage in a fight to the death inside the tour bus. Coahaagen pops off his false hand to reveal a spinning steel blade protruding from his wrist. Quaid/Mandrell rips open his pectoral muscle and withdraws a small pistol from its place against his real chest. Quaid, of course, defeats Coahaagen and goes on to resume his role of Chairman Mandrell, with Melina as his aide.

More than just the plot might have been different had Cronenberg seen his version of TOTAL RECALL filmed. Ron Miller, hired by DEG as production illustrator about the time of Cronenberg's involvement, remembered creatures called "Ganzibulls" in some of Cronenberg's drafts.

"Those were monsters from Ron Shusett's original script, which Cronenberg elaborated on," said Miller. "They were

Two Miller designs for Mars Port and the spaceship that brings Quaid to Mars.



creatures that lived in the sewers of the Mars city, called Venusville. In Cronenberg's version, they were mutant camels. In Ron's original script, the Martian colonists used camels as pack animals, and the camels wore oxygen masks. That was one of my favorite images of the whole script. I really was looking forward to seeing camels with oxygen masks. It was a totally unlikely, bizarre idea, but I really wanted it in there. Cronenberg elaborated on the camels idea by having the monsters in the sewers be mutant camels. They were in most of Cronenberg's scripts, I think."

Miller, art director Pier Luigi Basile and other illustrators spent a great deal of time at DEG's studios in Rome, where "nothing much really happened," Miller said. "We just drew all day for weeks on end. Cronenberg finally was hired, and he gave us more direction, more purpose. Bob Ringwood was going to do the costume design for the Cronenberg version, so he was there, off and on, for a couple of weeks and did a few sketches."

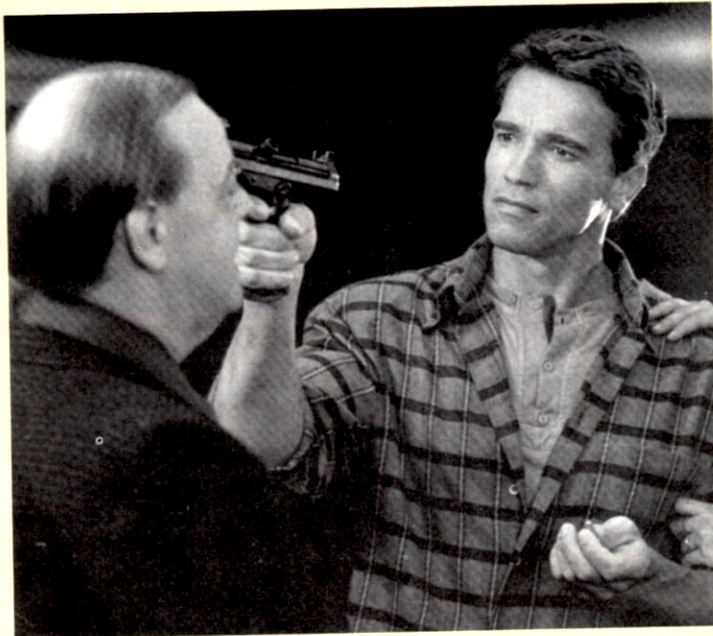
The illustrator offered his own explanation for Cronenberg's departure from TOTAL RECALL. "David's version never got made, mainly because of disagreements with Dino [DeLaurentiis]," said Miller. "Dino just didn't like Cronenberg's script, which is so different from Shusett's. In fact, Ron said they could easily use it as a sequel, just by changing the first part a little bit. Cronen-



A model of the Martian Sphynx by Judith Miller for Cronenberg's version, which Dino DeLaurentiis never filmed.

CRONENBERG VS. DINO

“Cronenberg wanted to do the film in his own style. I don't think Dino DeLaurentiis ever understood the kind of film Cronenberg was developing. Dino was baffled by it all.”



In his Mars hotel room, Quaid isn't quite convinced by Rekall's Dr. Edgemar (Roy Brocksmith) that he's just dreaming—a scene right out of Cronenberg's script.

berg preferred not to shoot something he hadn't written or rewritten, as the case might be. He worked closely with Shusett on his version, and Shusett basically liked it with some reservations, but it was completely different. For one thing, it didn't have all the humor that Shusett had written. Shusett's script was kind of like an Indiana Jones movie—tongue-in-cheek adventure."

Pier Luigi Basile, who worked with Miller in Rome, agreed. "Dino was very baffled by all this," said Basile. "That's what the problem was. Dino was not sure where to start. He

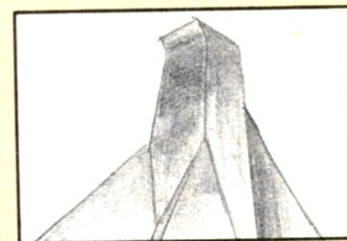
was not very happy about the script, because David wanted to do it in his own style, and David Cronenberg's style is very specific. Cronenberg rewrote the script, but Dino wasn't happy with it, and he stopped the preparation. He wanted a big, spectacular, action film, whereas Cronenberg didn't want to make an action film. He wanted to make a story about the main character. Dino wanted a big set, big special effects, big models. So, I don't think that Dino ever understood what kind of film Cronenberg was developing. I had brought up

draftsmen, I had that whole art department set up, and he stopped it all."

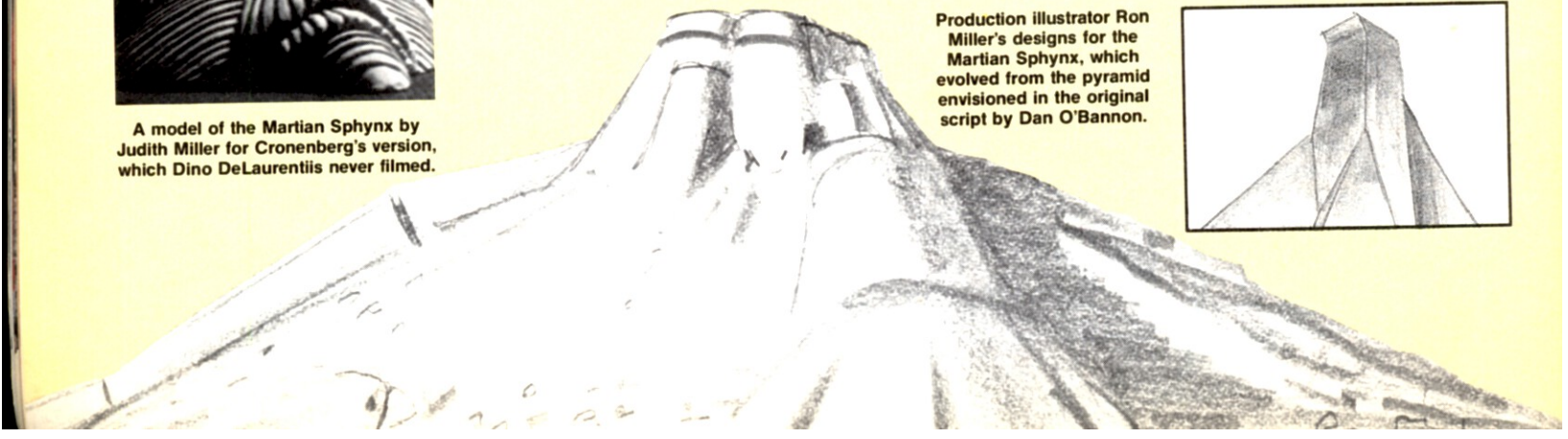
Basile said he regretted the missed opportunity of ever getting to make the film. "From the first time they gave me the script, I thought it was a wonderful story," said Basile. "Every time they cancelled, I said, 'Please do it, because this is the right moment.' This was years ago. It was the right time to make that kind of crazy but intriguing story."

Miller, who worked with Basile on DeLaurentiis' DUNE, was also eager to stay with TOTAL RECALL. "I was very fond of the script," he said. "It was—is—a slam bang movie; it starts up with some great pieces of action and then just goes, non-stop, all the way through. Shusett has this wonderfully quirky sense of humor, and I like that a lot too."

An exhibition of ancient torture instruments was held in Rome during the time that Cronenberg and the small art staff was there. "Cronenberg and I and some others went to see the torture exhibit one evening," recalled Miller. "Now these were the real things, nasty stuff, with incredibly vivid graphic captions describing the use of the instruments. About halfway through the exhibit, Cronenberg started to look a little queasy. I mentioned it to him. 'You practically invented exploding heads! Why does this stuff seem to bother you so much?' He said, 'Because this stuff is real!'" □



Production illustrator Ron Miller's designs for the Martian Sphynx, which evolved from the pyramid envisioned in the original script by Dan O'Bannon.



very hard to stay healthy there. I don't know why. It might be the food, or something else. Nevertheless, I think Mexico is a wonderful country."

Verhoeven said he was not immune to the mysterious Mexican bug. He found himself in terrible shape one night, but refused to hold up the shooting schedule. "I don't know what happened," he said. "It was one night, and it started at seven in the evening, and I had to shoot the whole night. By four or five the next morning I was completely dead, more or less. They had to give me IV's on the set, a lot of injections. The next day I was shooting again. So I lost an hour, probably. You have to go on, you cannot stop, it is so expensive. As long as you can stay on your legs, you are forced to continue."

Shusett recalled that Verhoeven could barely stand up that night. "I'll never forget when I saw him in the hotel lobby on the way to the set," said Shusett. "They had to wheel him to the car. He was so sick from the Mexican food that he had to be wheeled in between shots. They would take him to his trailer, put him to bed, plan another set-up, then take him back out. He was staggering. He couldn't talk. He couldn't even see straight. As soon as they got the shot, he'd go back to his trailer for an hour and throw up. I could hear him vomiting as I went past his trailer."

"This went on for twelve hours during a rainy night. He was able to direct at only half his usual efficiency. He couldn't get what he wanted, but the problem was that if we had hospitalized him, the insurance company would not have paid for the first three days of our shut-down—the production would have had to pay it. So it would have cost \$150,000 a day for every day Paul was in the hospital. He wanted that money to go toward the movie, so he would have rather been half dead and save that money to put toward the special effects. I admired him so much. I didn't know how he could do it. He was supervising every angle of the camera, and he was like a walking corpse."

THE MEXICAN STANDOFF: CAROLCO VS. RON SHUSETT

Fifteen years of false starts were enough to instill in TOTAL RECALL producer and co-screenwriter Ron Shusett a fierce paternal instinct to protect his creation. Carolco Pictures executives, however, who finally gave Shusett's dream project the green light on a mega \$60 million budget, saw his attachment to the property as anything but fatherly. According to Shusett, as filming progressed at Mexico's Churubusco Studios in 1989 he became, in their eyes, a "troublemaker."

In the face of a mounting budget which had been high at the outset, those at Carolco began to ask director Paul Verhoeven for cuts. Shusett's influence with Verhoeven and with star Arnold Schwarzenegger was greater than Carolco had expected. Shusett argued vehemently—and persuasively—against any down-scaling of the project. Carolco finally resorted to giving Shusett his eviction notice.

"I was trying so hard to get the movie I wanted on screen that [Carolco] had to throw me off," said Shusett. "I was influencing Paul and Arnold not to cut costs. The financiers wanted us to cut two or three things, very reasonable. They were giving us almost everything, so they said, 'You've got to cut something big.' I suggested cutting small things or trimming big things, but they said, 'No, just cut one big scene, and we can save \$2 or \$3 million.'"

But to every cut Carolco suggested, Shusett replied with an emphatic *No!* "I told Arnold and Paul to refuse to cut those scenes! They in turn told Carolco, 'Ron has convinced us not to cut it.' Finally, they threw me off the picture, halfway through. They gave me a notice that

said I was interfering with the movie." Shusett said he was told to leave Mexico City. Allegedly, Carolco's contract with Shusett provided that the executive producers were empowered to remove him from the picture if he interfered with the production.

But once again, Verhoeven and Schwarzenegger came to Shusett's rescue. According to



Shusett, producer and co-scripter, harder to throw off the set than Carolco imagined.

Shusett, they "ganged up on Carolco and Arnold said, 'I'll quit the movie if Ron is not allowed to continue.' Verhoeven wrote a letter, saying, 'I need Ron here.' So I didn't leave my hotel, and they had to rescind their notice."

Verhoeven saw the incident in far less epic proportions, however. "I think it was a big misunderstanding," said Verhoeven, frowning. "I didn't have the feeling it was that heavy. Carolco wanted to protect me. They tried to convince Ron that it would be better to leave me alone. I went to Carolco and said, 'This is not exactly the case. I would prefer to suffer under too much of Ron's advice than not have his advice at all, and I think it is better to have him—even if I disagree

with him—it's better to have this man on the set, because generally speaking, he'll improve the movie.'

"I think it was solved in 24 hours," said Verhoeven. "Ron felt it much more emotionally than anyone. I don't think he understood that Carolco was trying to help me. Carolco thought I was upset, and I was upset, because Ron was hammering, but I didn't *mind* being upset. I think it's good to be upset. I said to Carolco, 'Listen, let that go on, that is the process. This is a fight. We are fighting to make the best movie possible, and if I'm upset then I'll change my mind perhaps, or perhaps not. But it will only be for the good of the movie, because you make a better movie when you're upset.'"

No matter how bad the situation may have been in Shusett's eyes, he maintains that he still has a good relationship with Carolco executives. "I love Carolco," he insisted. "Even though they personally hurt me, they did keep risking on the movie. They tried to bluff Arnold and Paul, saying, 'We demand a compromise.' They never actually went to court on it. They just kept spending more money. So I felt kindly towards Carolco, and I don't care that they tried to remove me, because they didn't succeed. There's no bitterness left. It became a joke."

After Shusett's run-in with Carolco was resolved, the TOTAL RECALL film crew bought Shusett a t-shirt that read "I'm Still Here." Shusett laughed, "Everybody knew they had thrown me off the picture, and at first it was embarrassing, but then I was a hero because they couldn't get rid of me!"

Bill Florence



The survivors of Venusville, including mutant mother and child Monica Steur and Sasha Rionda, personalized by Paul Verhoeven to make the suspense ending work.

Verhoeven said he would go back to Mexico and do it again, because he likes the Mexican people so much. "I might protect myself the next time, though," he grinned, and noted that he swims an average of forty minutes every day—"I probably should swim for two hours each day before my next trip to Mexico!"

Though Verhoeven has made a name for himself as a director

of science fiction films, his favorite movie is *SOLDIER OF ORANGE*, his 1979 saga of the Dutch resistance in WWII. "There's a bit more humanity in it," he said. "People are more prominent there than in *ROBOCOP* or *TOTAL RECALL*. Inter-relationships are more peripheral in both those movies."

Plans for Verhoeven to direct *DONOSAUR* for Walt

VERHOEVEN ON STAMINA

"I was completely dead. They had to give me IVs on the set, a lot of injections. You have to go on. You cannot stop. As long as you can stay on your legs you are forced to continue."

Disney on the heels of *TOTAL RECALL* fell through when the studio failed to green light the expensive project. "It's a stop-motion movie about dinosaurs," said Verhoeven, who was to share the film's direction with effects animator Phil Tippett. "It's full of miniatures and special effects, a big production. I think the story of the dinosaurs and whatever happened to them and why, is intriguing."

The project, produced by Jon Davison, for whom Verhoeven directed *ROBOCOP*, strives for scientific accuracy, which meant no actors playing cavemen. "Dinosaurs have a cosmic quality," noted Verhoeven. "It might be the only movie that will still be watcha-

ble in twenty years, like *SNOW WHITE* is still watchable. A movie like *DINOSAUR* might have the advantage of staying around a little longer. If we are all striving for immortality, that might be the basic reason for me to do it."

For his next project Verhoeven has turned his back on science fiction for a while. He is currently preparing to direct *BASIC INSTINCT*, an original script by Joe Eszterhas (*THE JAGGED EDGE*) to star Michael Douglas. Reportedly, Verhoeven's take on the material will do for sexual excess what *ROBOCOP* and *TOTAL RECALL* did for graphic violence, sure to push the boundaries of the newly instituted NC-17 rating. □

THE BRUCE BERESFORD VERSION

In 1986, after nearly ten years in development, producer Dino DeLaurentiis turned the *TOTAL RECALL* script over to director Bruce Beresford, who went on to become the Oscar-nominated director of *DRIVING MISS DAISY*. Beresford's involvement attracted Patrick Swayze, who had recently starred in *DIRTY DANCING*. It was only the financial collapse of DeLaurentiis' DEG production and distribution empire that kept the movie from reaching the screen with Beresford at the helm.

"His was a more subtle approach, more a 'Spielbergish' approach, more fun than gritty," said *TOTAL RECALL* producer and co-scripter Ron Shusett. Beresford changed the script's dialogue to satisfy himself, but the plot was nearly identical



Beresford (l) cast Patrick Swayze (r) as Quaid.

to that filmed by Paul Verhoeven.

"Beresford was crushingly disappointed, as I was," said Shusett, concerning the director's inability to be part of *TOTAL RECALL* when Carolco revived the project. "He was unavailable. It came together, finally, when he could no longer be a part of it, and I'm very sad about that."

Those at the special effects company Introvision were also disappointed when the roof came down on DEG and a satisfactory deal could not be made with Carolco. Under

Beresford, Introvision would have created the film's special effects.

"We could do the picture down in Australia in his [DeLaurentiis'] new studios, whereas other special effects companies were completely against going down there," said Andy Naud of Introvision. "Our system is very portable. We eliminate optical printers for the most part. We eliminate so much equipment because of our new technology that we could go down there, set up in the studios down there and film the movie the way we would film anything up here. That was very much to their liking, because they wanted to do the film as an Australian production."

Perhaps due to DEG's financial difficulties, Naud found that it was hard to strike a deal with DeLauren-

tiis. "We found it was very difficult to structure a deal with him, because he didn't want to give up any money," said Naud. "He wanted just to lead us along."

Once a deal was made, the staff at Introvision went to work storyboarding Beresford's shots. "We started in late March and literally storyboarded all the difficult sequences in the movie, and provided answers and consultations. In late August we received the first payment, and we sent people down to Australia, where we began building miniature models. Then in December 1987, DEG collapsed."

Enter Arnold Schwarzenegger, who liked Shusett's script when he read it while working for DeLaurentiis. Schwarzenegger instigated Carolco Picture's purchase of the rights for a whopping \$5 million.

Bill Florence

TOTAL RECALL

THE MAGIC OF SPECIAL EFFECTS

How makeup artist Rob Bottin stopped the film dead in its tracks to do his act.

By Carl Brandon

The most impressive of Rob Bottin's makeup effects for TOTAL RECALL proved to be Schwarzenegger's robotic disguise as a fat lady. Though visually intriguing, Bottin's effect does precisely what an effect should not, it draws attention to itself and stops the film cold in its tracks. Not surprisingly, Bottin, appearing on L.A.'s HOUR 25 radio interview show, said he had a hard time selling director Paul Verhoeven on the idea.

"If you are going to have an effect, you might as well make it as amazing as possible," said Bottin, who was once invited to work on the film during its days with Dino DeLaurentiis, shortly after Bottin finished THE HOWLING (1981). Instead of giving Schwarzenegger a disguise he would merely peel off, Bottin said he conceived of removing the disguise like a "transforming robot... like a Venetian or Japanese puzzle."

According to Bottin, he had no idea how to do the effect when he suggested it to Verhoeven. Bottin said he saw the idea



Schwarzenegger, pursued by a mob of Mars security thugs, pauses in mid-chase to show off the mask of Bottin's fat lady trick.

bomb? That's what it is! That's why they don't get him.' Paul, having a strange sense of humor, stood up, threw himself against a wall, and started cackling like a maniac. That's the kind of stuff he likes."

If that was the idea, Verhoeven failed in communicating the premise to audiences, which were as much confused as astounded. Noted Bottin about his unique approach to movie special effects, "I'm from the Evel Knievel school of special effects. Once in a while I end up with a few broken legs when I do these things." □

as "an opportunity for the curtain to come up and for me to perform. I owe it to the audience." Bottin noted how he convinced a doubtful Verhoeven, "That's why you are hiring me, to be innovative."

Though Verhoeven gave Bottin the go-ahead to develop the idea, the director questioned it a few weeks later, bringing up the valid dramatic point of why Schwarzenegger's pursuers would suddenly stop in mid-chase to watch Bottin's magic act. "I was just winging it," said Bottin. "I looked at Paul and said, 'What if it's a



"It's a bomb!" was how Bottin explained to a doubting Paul Verhoeven why the crowd stops to gape (left) as Quaid's fat lady disguise begins to go haywire (right). Bottin's mechanical likeness of actress Priscilla Allen opens to reveal an Arnold Schwarzenegger prop head inside, an effect that proved visually stunning at the cost of dramatic credibility.

WENDIGO

Tyro director Tom Chaney insisted on the magic of stop-motion monster effects.

By Sue Uram

Michigan filmmaker Tom Chaney had a nightmare. And he also had a dream. Chaney's nightmare involved a flesh-eating monster. His dream was to follow in the footsteps of fellow Michiganite Sam Raimi, who hit it big in 1982 with *THE EVIL DEAD*, at the age of 22. In February 1987, Chaney began work on a movie that epitomized his phantasm. It finally reached movie theatres last October. *WENDIGO*, which Chaney wrote, produced and directed on a low budget, is based on an Algonquin Indian legend. Chaney self-distributed the film for theatrical play

The film begins with Mike Missler as The Guardian, in makeup by Gary Jones, writing the Wendigo legend.



Chaney (holding slate) with fellow Michigan filmmakers (l to r) Joel Hale, co-producer David Thiry, and Paul Harris, entrepreneurs who shot the film in 16mm for just \$125,000.

dates in Detroit and Ann Arbor last Halloween, to show its potential to prospective buyers.

Chaney began building the creature for his movie on his mother's kitchen table. Originally hailing from Woodhaven, Michigan, the 1986 Eastern Michigan University graduate moved to Chelsea, Michigan, where he rented offices in the Chelsea Industries Annex under the name of Excalibur Motion Pictures. Chaney, 25, invested \$17,500 out of his own pocket for the production and filming of his horror film debut.

In fact, financing for the movie was so tight, Chaney was forced to place undeveloped film in his home freezer until Kodak volunteered to develop it on a "pay as you go" plan. "One Christmas I was able to get two credit cards," said Chaney. "I charged the price of eighteen rolls of film so

that we could finish the shoot." The film then sat in Chaney's freezer for about nine months until he could afford to pay the developing costs. But, Chaney's dogged determination appears to have paid off. "I wanted to prove that I could make a movie as cheaply as possible that was still marketable," said Chaney. "I think I have accomplished that."

The Indian legend that inspired the film was actually invented to explain the disappearance of Indian villagers in the night. During periods of severe weather when no game or food could be found, tribal Indians would kidnap an unfortunate in the night and use them for food in order to survive. To cover up the act of cannibalism, the Wendigo, an evil spirit, was invented to explain the disappearance of the tribal member.

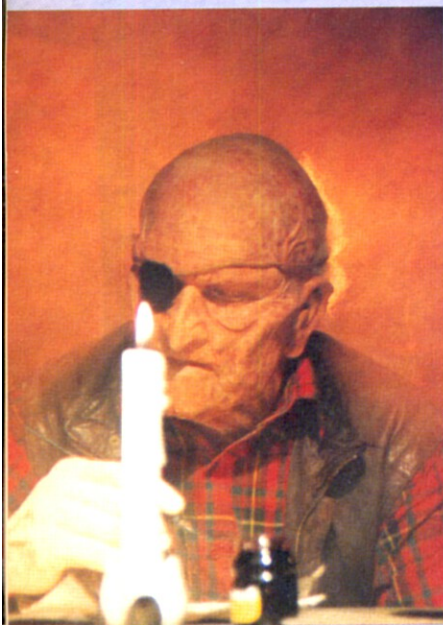
Chaney's movie envisions

the Wendigo as a monster held prisoner inside a circle of skulls by a chosen "spiritual" guardian. When the monster's wizened caretaker is inadvertently killed by a drunken hunter, the horrible Wendigo is freed to deal death and destruction on the world. While three hunters fight various permutations of the Wendigo's evil in a battered cabin, the new chosen caretaker is on her way to reconstruct the circle of skulls and relegate the Wendigo back to Hell.

Chaney's partner and co-producer, David Thiry, 32, recalled shooting the film's outdoor scenes during the two coldest days in Michigan history. "The trembling going on among the main actors was from the freezing cold and not just because they were acting," said Thiry. Michigan locations used in *WENDIGO* included Dearborn, Dexter, Livonia, Tecumseh, Houghton Lake, and Chaney's neighbor's backyard where the Wendigo's hell-hole was dug.

The hunter's cabin was actually an old schoolhouse destined for demolition and rescued by Chaney and Thiry. It was then re-built in miniature in Chaney's basement, where effects footage was subsequently shot. Actor Tom Asheton doubled as both star and cook for the movie. "The chili the monster pops out of in the cabin scene doubled as our dinner that day," he laughed.

Chaney called in many favors from local Michigan effects artists to construct his Wen-





The Wendigo (left), a stop-motion effect supervised and photographed by Tom Hitchcock, animated by Dave Hettmer, two of Chaney's Michigan filmmaker friends. Above: The monster stoops to grab a hunter played by Patrick Butler, stop-motion intercut with a live-action prop by Gary Jones.

Wendigo and finish the movie. Originally, the creature began as an oversized blue hand with three fingers, built by Chaney. Enter Gary Jones of Livonia's Acme Special Effects, who worked on the Michigan video hit MOONTRAP. Jones rebuilt the monster's hand and gave it life along with assisting on the film's many other gruesome set pieces. Dave Hettmer of Livonia's Phantasy Visual Effects, another MOONTRAP alumnus, then resculpted the Wen-

diggo in miniature from a cast and a ten-inch xerox picture. Using the stop-motion techniques of Ray Harryhausen, Hettmer filmed the monster in rear-screen action over a period of seven months. Ed Wollman of Livonia's Illuminations Effects, added optical effects such as the film's laser-like lightning. The post-production effects work was shot in 35mm, then reduced down for editing with the film's principal photography, shot in 16mm to

save money.

Gary Sorenson of Cinemakers entered the picture when the project was about seventy percent complete, adding finishing money that brought the film's total budget to just \$125,000. Sorenson planned to cut the film to a tight 79 minute running time, and hopes to get a PG-13 rating, due to some nudity. Sorenson stressed that WENDIGO is meant to be marketed as a horror-spoof, since Chaney's inspiration for the film's besieged hunters was the Three Stooges. Sorenson said the film's original music score highlights its comedic undertones. Noted Thiry about screening the film for audiences, "It gets about fifty percent laughs, fifty percent screams."

No one connected with the movie has received compensation for their work. In fact, Chaney and Thiry have only recently been able to quit their day jobs in order to finish editing the film, thanks to the financing from Cinemakers.

Like most low-budget productions, the filmmakers ended up wearing many hats. Besides writing, producing and directing, Chaney also helped edit and photograph the film. Thiry served as production manager, assistant director and cinematographer as well as co-producer. And Joel Hale and Paul Harris acted in the film as well as handled various sound, editing and effects chores. □

Lori Baker as Sandy, the girl fated to take The Guardian's place, smiles between takes in the Michigan cold.



Jones, the film's makeup and mechanical effects supervisor, puppets the "chili monster," a Wendigo manifestation that springs from the pot to attack Pat Butler.



BRUCE JOEL RUBIN

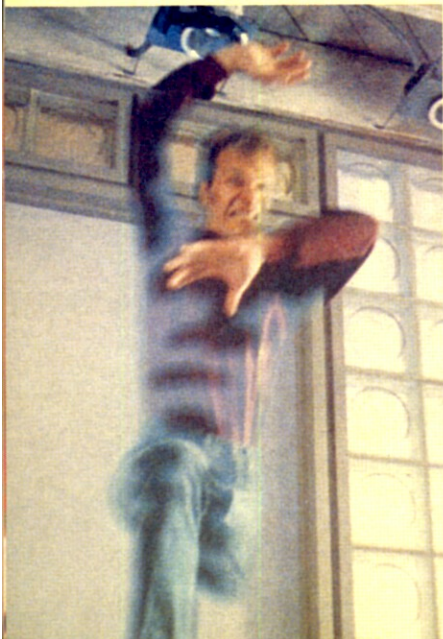
MOVIE METAPHYSICIAN

Rubin ponders the imponderable in scripts like **GHOST** and **JACOB'S LADDER**.

By Sheldon Teitelbaum

Screenwriter Bruce Joel Rubin has his head in the clouds. In less than a decade, he has become Hollywood's resident *maven* of the Hereafter. Driven by long-standing and deep-rooted metaphysical impulses, Rubin, 46, knows the terrain like no one else in the industry. And each of the films based upon his screenplays—the 1983 Douglas Trumbull movie **BRAINSTORM**, last year's surprise hit **GHOST**, and director Adrian Lyne's horror encore, **JACOB'S LADDER**—has strived, albeit with mixed success, to render a celluloid-based road map of the Great Beyond.

The ectoplasmic Patrick Swayze in Rubin's **GHOST**, which turned out to be the biggest boxoffice hit of last year.



Rubin, in the window of a Vietnam hut, filming the opening of **JACOB'S LADDER**.

Indeed, Rubin's career can best be understood as a *hutzpah* laden attempt to sneak a movie camera into the next world and to return with the footage—and himself—intact. If the prospect of death leaves Rubin, a resident of the slightly less-than-heavenly San Fernando Valley, relatively undaunted, he found that filtering his personal sensibilities through a director—a plight common to most screenwriters—can be purgatory.

In **BRAINSTORM**, Rubin's eclectic metaphysical imagery—culled from the commonalities of the world's major religions—clashed with director Douglas Trumbull's Christian religiosity, ultimately losing out to it. "The angels flapping around in there were not mine," declared Rubin.

Indeed, the only scene in **BRAINSTORM** Rubin felt captured his idea of how it might actually be to die was where scientist Louise Fletcher

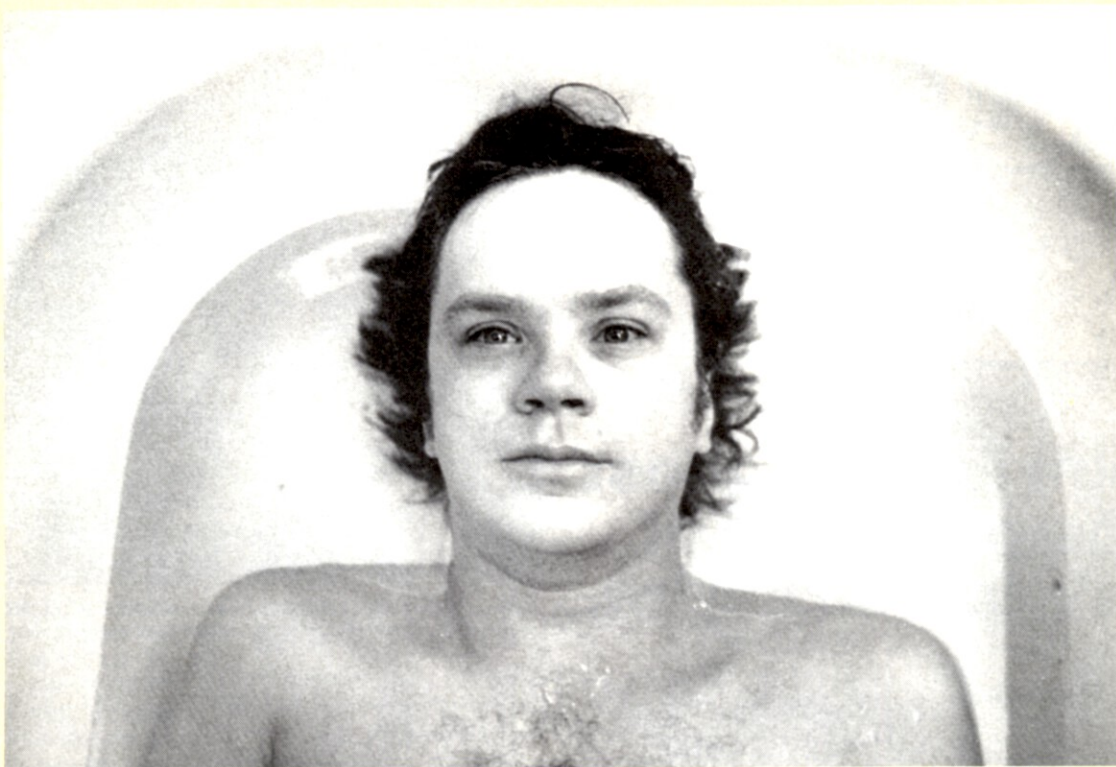
separates from her body, and moves into what Rubin called a "bubble memory mode." Recalled Rubin, "That idea came from an earlier script I wrote called **QUASAR**. In it, people who had just died would speed alongside their memories, which were like running trains, intersecting with them in a kind of chromosomal network. To me, that's a very real image, and very exciting."

Louise Fletcher's death, captured in a memory bubble, in Rubin's **BRAINSTORM**.



Though Rubin objected to the Christian symbolism of **BRAINSTORM**—not found in his script—he relied heavily on just such imagery in writing **GHOST**. "That proposed a heaven and a hell that was purely Judeo-Christian," said Rubin. "As a child I had an Old Testament with these wonderful Babylonian drawings. They contributed heavily to the sense of Hebraic imagery you find it in all my scripts."

GHOST, according to Rubin, offers a sense of how one's passing might be governed by the tenor of one's life. As in some Far Eastern religions, Rubin believes that death represents an unraveling of ego, but only for those prepared to let go. Those who are not become trapped, and it is this captivity which becomes hellish. As directed by Jerry Zucker, Rubin's script outperformed such boxoffice sureties last summer as **DICK TRACY** and **TOTAL RECALL**. "It was an amazingly effective movie," said Rubin, "mainly because we all



Tim Robbins as Jacob, saved from death by an ice bath that lowers his raging fever, or already dead as Rubín suggests?

got out of the way of this incredibly sweet story.”

GHOST deftly addressed a widely-held sense that there is no real justice in the universe, a prospect Rubín’s Judaic value-system could not abide. It also expressed another thought dear to Rubín—that there are no immutable barriers between this world and the next. But as a gritty depiction of the shape and texture of that universe, however, it was strictly Spielbergian—diffused light, cotton candy clouds and sugar-coating.

Twice thwarted in his enduring attempt to do death right without actually taking the plunge himself, Rubín banked on Lyne’s JACOB’S LADDER, to come up with the goods. “In JACOB’S LADDER,” said Rubín, “we find a man on a journey that is inexplicable. He is seeing archetypal demonic forms that belong in medieval times, not in the 20th century American experience. In my script, Jacob was a renegade Jewish existentialist—a philosopher who had no religion, just a universal sense of absurdity. Jacob had bought into the existential idea that man lives and dies for no particular reason, and ends in darkness. A man of that nature, I thought, would be the most prone to be

“God is not something merely to be argued about or believed in as an act of faith, but something to be known, something you can tune in and touch while you are alive.”

terrified of archetypal, demonic images. Having no religious background, he is perhaps the most vulnerable to experiencing them.”

Jacob’s Jewishness has been washed out of Lyne’s film. Rubín admitted that was a shame, not least because Jacob’s predicament works, he acknowledged, as a nifty metaphor for modern day, secular Israel, which sometimes appears inadvertently to be caught up in the Christian scenario of the End of Days.

“There is, in fact, a part in the film which did not survive which is about an apocalypse,” said Rubín. “An individual experiencing their own demise will experience an intimation of the world’s demise. There was originally a sense in the film that the world was actually coming to an end.”

The sense of personal apocalypse infusing the script later found echoes in Rubín’s own

climb up the ladder of accomplishment as a screenwriter. In 1981, JACOB’S LADDER was voted by *American Film*’s writer Stephen Rebello as one of the ten best scripts never made (see 16:1:19). JACOB’S LADDER languished in Hollywood for nearly a decade. It was read by every studio in town, admired by all who saw it, attracted big name directors like Ridley Scott, Sidney Lumet and Brian DePalma (Rubín’s old schoolmate), but was pronounced by all impossible to make for less than the gross budget of HEAVEN’S GATE.

Rubín had long entertained notions of directing JACOB’S LADDER himself, figuring it would help—though by no means assure—the accurate translation of his story to film. But Rubín was genuinely delighted to land a director of Lyne’s distinction. And though they often fought vigorously to preserve their respective visions

of the film, the collaboration between them was—insofar as anyone can tell—a match made in, well . . .

Rubín said he got his first inkling of the true nature of Heaven from a Tibetan monk who had an abiding passion for actress Elke Sommer, expressed in the dozens of nude photographs tacked to the walls of his hut. This was during the ’60s, when Rubín wandered the world looking for the usual big answers he wasn’t finding within his own tradition.

“Though raised as a Reform Jew,” said Rubín, “I was rarely satisfied in my deeper spiritual yearning by any of my religious practice. I always found a sense of emptiness, of talking about, but not touching, the truth I was hungry for. Talking about truth is no substitute for experiencing it.”

The monk, Rubín discovered, was looking for his own answers—mostly about life in America. And when Rubín described the middle-class American home he had grown up in, the monk became convinced that Rubín had, in fact, come to Katmandu from Heaven.

“It took me a while to understand that he was right,” said Rubín. “For people who have never experienced such ameni-

JACOB'S LADDER

The film is but a ghost of the potential of Rubin's famed script.

By Charles D. Leayman

The final draft of Bruce Joel Rubin's script of JACOB'S LADDER (published by Applause Books) is an undeniably gripping read that monopolizes the attention with its very first page. A hellish fire-fight in the Vietnam jungles whips in a flash to the hero's entrapment in a New York subway, and from then on the script exudes a burgeoning menace that stamps its vivid imagery on the mind's mental screen with indelible impact. Rubin's professed concern with issues of spirituality, with ultimate questions of life and death, resonates through his tale of a haunted Nam vet who suddenly spies demons in the peripheral vision of his life. Finely detailed, with an eye and ear sensitive to the ebb and flow of ordinary people caught in extraordinary circumstances, Rubin's script immerses its beleaguered protagonist in a cloven-hooved demonology out of Dore and Bosch. While Rubin's last effort, the surprise mega-hit GHOST, traded in feel-good metaphysical kitsch, his JACOB'S LADDER exhibits an Old Testament sternness and psychological insight that impart an epic, magisterial quality that director Adrian Lyne's film version fails to capture.

Jacob Singer (Tim Robbins in a warm, heroic performance) is a Manhattan mailman and

divorced father, sharing an edgily happy relationship with the strong-willed Jezz (Elizabeth Pena), another postal employee. As he begins to undergo demonic apparitions, his rising panic triggers flashbacks to a nightmarish incident in Vietnam and to memories of his youngest son, Gabe, who died beneath the wheels of a truck. With his visions becoming ever more fearsome, Jacob discovers that the other surviving members of his platoon are experiencing similar visitations.

Singer is unexpectedly contacted by an ex-hippie who served as a U.S. Army chemist in order to beat jail and who concocted a lethal drug ("The Ladder") capable of tapping the user's most primal aggressions. The platoon's members were used as guinea pigs to test the drug's effectiveness, but only managed to massacre themselves. Jacob now realizes that the "demons" are either

drug-induced fantasies, military agents intent on suppressing the past, or actual metaphysical messengers from beyond.

In an invaluable afterword to his script chronicling the tortuous evolution of JACOB'S LADDER from page to screen, Rubin acknowledged the conceptual differences between his and Lyne's approach to the material. Where the writer favored an elaborate iconography of horned devils and radiant angels drawn from the familiar Western religious tradition, the director preferred a less spectacular, more interiorized scenario that would locate Heaven and Hell firmly within *this* world. Gone are the script's winged furies materializing through walls and wrestling for Jacob's soul seen in production sketches when *Cinefantastique* hailed Rubin's script as an unfilmed masterpiece in 1981 [16:1:19].

Lyne amid the charnel house atmosphere of the film's hellish hospital basement.



Heavenly light suffuses Jacob's climactic salvation as Tim Robbins reunites with dead son B.J. Donaldson, director Adrian Lyne's secular vision of Rubin's script.

Gone is the script's storm-wracked apocalypse in which Jacob confronts the most hideous spectre of all (and the Devil's supreme ally): himself. Gone is the beatific vision of Eden that Jacob experiences on being given an antidote to The Ladder by the repentant chemist. Gone is the latter's severed head. Lyne has produced a consistently more secular (and economically feasible) version of Rubin's script that retains Jacob's climactic "salvation," but does so without the overtly theological trappings.

Even without disembodied torsos, Lyne can conjure properly Guignol moments when he chooses (as FATAL ATTRACTION proved), and there are several set pieces in the film that remain intensely true to the dark spirit of Rubin's letter. Jacob's subway ordeal when the demons first present them-

continued on page 60

JACOB'S LADDER

A Tri-Star release of a Carolco Pictures production. 10/90, 113 mins. In Dolby & color. Director, Adrian Lyne. Producer, Alan Marshall. Executive producers, Mario Kasar & Andrew Vajna. Director of photography, Jeffrey L. Kimball. Editor, Tom Rolf. Production designer, Brian Morris. Principal art director, Jeremy Conway. Art director, Wray Steven Graham. Set decorator, Kathleen Dolan & Leticia Stella-Serra. Costume designer, Ellen Mirojnick. Special prosthetic effects designer, Gordon J. Smith. Music, Maurice Jarre. Sound; Tod A. Maitland, Andy Nelson, Steve Pederson & Michael Gettin. Screenplay by Bruce Joel Rubin.

Jacob Singer	.....	Tim Robbins
Jezz	.....	Elizabeth Pena
Louis	.....	Danny Aiello
Michael	.....	Matt Craven
Paul	.....	Pruitt Taylor Vince
Geary	.....	Jason Alexander
Sarah	.....	Patricia Kalember
Frank	.....	Erik La Salle
George	.....	Ving Rhames
Doug	.....	Brian Tarantina

JACOB'S LADDER

Canadian effects expert Gord Smith on how Rubin's hellish imagery got abandoned.

By Gary Kimber

Meat, chaos, war. Those are the buzzword's Toronto effects man Gordon Smith used to describe his work on JACOB'S LADDER. Smith provided the bloody combat effects for a trio of films by Oliver Stone—SALVADOR, PLATOON and BORN ON THE FOURTH OF JULY. Smith and his EfxSmith company were once again called upon to recreate the carnage of Vietnam with heightened realism by director Adrian Lyne. But Smith's far more interesting contribution, visualizing Jacob's demonic visions, is all but lost amid Lyne's strobe lighting and frenetic cutting.

Smith and co-workers, including Evan Penny, Ray MacIntosh and Joe Ventura, worked on creating a series of thirty hellish makeup—dubbed with names like Tripehead, Laughing Boy, Cleaverhead, Split-Face and Dog Boy—glimpsed only fleetingly, almost subliminally in the film. Smith said Lyne and producers Brian Morris and Alan Marshall weren't very specific about the kinds of hallucinations they wanted Jacob to see, leaving much of the conjuring up to Smith. He estimated only about half of the concepts realized came from Lyne or Morris or other departments like costuming.

And when Smith was presented with ideas, the descriptions tended to be vague. "Like a sea of egg, but dripping only a certain way, and through it an eyeball, muscles stretching off," is how Smith described the kind of inspiration he was given. "It's a nice description," groused Smith, "but how the fuck do you make something like that?" But though Smith worked mightily to make concrete and physical the stuff of Jacob's visions, in the end Lyne rendered them vague once more.

Smith said Morris and Marshall provided images to communicate the visual look they



One of Smith's briefly glimpsed horror heads, a look of organic surrealism instead of the classical demons Rubin envisioned.

wanted, including artwork by English painter Francis Bacon, Swiss surrealist H. R. Giger, and baroque photographer Joel Peter Witkins. "You got the impression talking with them that they didn't necessarily want to do what was in Bruce Joel Rubin's script," said Smith. The Giger look was soon discarded as being too recognizable to the public, according to Smith, leaving the production to focus on Witkins' images of real freaks coupled with the violent sense of movement suggested by Bacon, "representing chaos." Also suggested for inspiration early on were the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch which Smith rejected because "they cartoon too easily."

Smith was somewhat defensive when asked why neither Bacon nor Witkins are credited in the film. "We used their works like we used cattle, by dissecting them and casting their interiors," said Smith, referring to how the film's bloody body parts were created. "There is nothing new in this world. Everything is a copy of something else. We pushed past both of those gentlemen." To give the makeup the jarring effect of rapid intense movements, images

were photographed at as little as three frames per second, then projected at twenty-four. Mechanics were also built to vibrate arms, legs and heads, used only infrequently during filming.

With blood and gore and "meat" key to the film's Vietnam-based imagery, it's somewhat surprising to learn that Smith, now in his late thirties, had to conquer a phobic reaction to the sight of blood. Smith was recently the subject of a CBS 48 HOURS segment on phobias. He noted that it was his line of work that actually helped him overcome his fear. Not surprisingly, Smith said he doesn't like the kind of movies he's called to work on—he also did the giant, bloody rat creature of GRAVEYARD SHIFT.

"I don't go to horror movies," said Smith. "I hate them. Those with major phobias don't see movies that are going to scare the shit out of them. If the illusion is complete I'm going to pass out in the popcorn."

Smith noted with pride that the meat in JACOB'S LADDER, while it may have looked real, was all synthetics created in his shop. A neat surrealistic touch Smith devised that was left on the cutting room floor had eyes inside the body parts open up and stare at Jacob. □

Smith, a horror specialist with a surprising phobia for blood and guts.



ties, what could be more like Heaven than a house with hot and cold running water, central heating, a washing machine, dishwasher and television? This was what primitive and aboriginal or medieval societies had always imagined the Next World to be."

It was not, however, a concept Rubin, a native of Detroit, could easily share. Judaism had little use for prolonged contemplation of an afterlife, preferring to accentuate the here-and-now. But Rubin felt driven toward a transcendentalism Judaism does not provide those not extremely well versed in its practices and teachings.

"God is not something merely to be argued about or believed in as an act of faith, but something to be known," said Rubin. "The potential is there in every human being to know God in a personal sense. God is not something to be met with or dealt with after you leave this world, but something you can tune into and touch while you are alive.

"Expressing my sense of the Hereafter has probably been the prime motivating factor for my writing. I want to make people understand through film that there is more to their lives than their sensory reality informs them."

Perhaps for this reason, Rubin said he does not like last summer's FLATLINERS, another in a spate of movies oriented similarly to his own. Starring Kiefer Sutherland and comely Julia Roberts, FLATLINERS tells of a group of medical students who arrange their own heart-stoppage and subsequent revival to experience the act of dying without actually passing irrevocably into the next world.

"I found FLATLINERS disturbing," said Rubin, criticizing scriptwriter Peter Filardi. "It depicted the departure from this world in every single case as a terrible experience. This is irresponsible of the writer, and frankly, I don't think he took the notions he was planting in the public mind seriously. As someone who is aware of how these concepts can rebound within the public consciousness, I take my responsibility as a writer very seriously." □

FILM RATINGS

BAXTER

Directed by Jerome Boivin. BackStreet Films, 11/90, 82 mins. In French with English subtitles. With: Francois Driancourt, Maxime Leroux, Lise Delamare.

A guaranteed restorative for anyone who still harbors revenge fantasies against that loathsome party-animal, Spuds McKenzie. Baxter, the film's protagonist and narrator (voice of Maxime Leroux), is a distinctly homely bull terrier with a fascist's revulsion for weakness and an overwhelming desire to be owned by someone "like me, who doesn't feel love or fear." When he finally falls into the authoritarian hands of a middle-class adolescent (Francois Driancourt)—a sort of Gallic G. Gordon Liddy who drives thumb-tacks into his palms, compliments girls by telling them they look like Eva Braun, and builds a replica of Hitler's bunker in a junkyard—it's a match as perfect and perverse as anything conceived by A BOY AND HIS DOG's Harlan Ellison ("I feel as if the chain is tightening around my neck," the dog rhapsodizes. "It hurts, and I like it.") Fine, grim satire from French director Jerome Boivin, in his debut effort.

•• Dan Persons

BLOOD SALVAGE

Directed by Tucker Johnston. Magnum, 11/90, 88 mins. With: Danny Nelson, Lori Birdsong, Ray Walston, John Saxon, Christian Hester.

A rather disturbing film about a family of crazed redneck auto mechanics who kidnap unwary travelers and use them as unwilling organ donors. Danny Nelson, father of the bunch, wants to cure paraplegic teen Lori Birdsong, who resembles his late wife, so he hijacks the family RV and uses her mother, father, and brother for spare parts. Veers wildly from sick humor (one of the captives is Elvis!) to gruesome and sick horror. Portraying the insane crackers as religious fanatics is offensive, and the scenes of the partially-dissected (but alive) victims are unpleasant, to say the least. On the plus side, the characterizations are vivid and the script doesn't cheat the audience, maintaining interest throughout (although where Nelson got his medical skills isn't noted). Worth watching, but not for all tastes.

• David Wilt

BURIED ALIVE

Directed by Gerard Kikoine. RCA-Columbia Home Video, 11/90, 90 mins. With: Robert Vaughn, Donald Pleasence, Karen Witter.

FILM TITLE	●●●●		●●●		●●		●		○	
	MUST SEE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	MEDIOCRE	POOR					
	VJB	FSC	DG	AJ	BK	GK	DS			
ALMOST AN ANGEL /John Cornell Paramount, 12/90, 97 mins.	●	●		○	●					
CHILD'S PLAY II /John Lafia Universal, 11/90, 84 mins.	●	●		○	●	○				
DARKMAN /Sam Raimi Universal, 8/90, 96 mins.	●●●	●●●●	●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●			
DEF BY TEMPTATION /James Bond 3d Troma, 4/90, 95 mins.	●	●		●	●●	●●	●			
EDWARD SCISSORHANDS /Tim Burton Fox, 12/90.	●●●	●●●			●●●		●●●			
FANTASIA /Walt Disney Buena Vista, 10/90 (1940 re-issue), 126 mins.	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●			
THE FLASH /Gail Morgan Hickman CBS-TV, 9/90, 60 mins.	●●	●●	●	●●	●●	●●	●●			
FLATLINERS /Joel Schumacher Columbia, 8/90, 111 mins.	●	●	●	●	●●	●●●	●●			
FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND /Roger Corman Fox, 11/90, 85 mins.	●●	●●●		●	●	●●				
GHOST /Jerry Zucker Paramount, 7/90, 127 mins.	●●	●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●			
GRAVEYARD SHIFT /Ralph S. Singleton Paramount, 10/90, 87 mins.	●●	○	○		●	●●				
HARDWARE /Richard Stanley Miramax, 9/90, 92 mins.	●●	●●●●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●			
THE ICICLE THIEF /Maurizio Nichetti Aries, 8/90.	●●			●●		●●				
IT /Tommy Lee Wallace ABC-TV, 11/90, 240 mins.	●	●	●●		●	●●	●●●			
JACOB'S LADDER /Adrian Lyne Tri-Star, 11/90, 117 mins.	●●	●●	●	○	●	●●●	●			
LOOK WHO'S TALKING TOO / Amy Heckerling, Tri-Star, 12/90.	○	●			○					
MISERY /Rob Reiner Columbia, 11/90, 107 mins.	●●●	●●●●		●●	●●	●●●	●●			
MR. DESTINY /James Orr Buena Vista, 10/90, 105 mins.	●	●●	●		●	●				
MR. FROST /Philip Setbon Triumph, 11/90, 104 mins.	●●			○	●●	●●				
NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD / Columbia, 10/90, 89 mins.	●	●●●●	●		●	●●	●●			
PACIFIC HEIGHTS /John Schlesinger Fox, 9/90, 107 mins.	●●●	●●	●●	○	●●	●●	●●●			
PREDATOR 2 /Stephen Hopkins Fox, 11/90, 108 mins.	●●	●●●	●		●	○	●●●			
THE RESCUERS DOWN UNDER /Butoy & Gabriel, Buena Vista, 11/90, 110 mins.	●●		●●		●●	●●●	●●			
ROBOT JOX /Stuart Gordon Triumph, 11/90, 84 mins.		●	○		●					
TWO EVIL EYES /Romero & Argento Taurus, 10/90, 105 mins.				●●	●	●●				
THE WITCHES /Nicholas Roeg Warner Bros, 8/90, 95 mins.	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●			

VJB/Vincent J. Bossone FSC/Frederick S. Clarke DG/Dann Gire AJ/Alan Jones
BK/Bill Kelley GK/Gary Kimber DS/Dan Scapperotti

In this spurious Edgar Allan Poe adaptation, Robert Vaughn is the director of an experimental institution for emotionally disturbed female offenders (although from their scanty attire and general deportment, it could very well be a school for teenage hookers). Girls with attitude problems are bricked up alive in the walls of the basement—the supposed Poe connection—as neurotic new teacher Witter discovers. Kikoine, director of last year's EDGE OF SAN-

ITY, makes a few stabs at style and the camera work and overall production are slick enough, but the script is poor and Vaughn just doesn't have the right crazed personality to make it work. Former porn star Ginger Lynn has a supporting role, and John Carradine appears (in a wheelchair) for about one minute, as Vaughn's father. Produced by the defunct Cannon Films as part of a series of Poe low-budgeters.

• David Wilt

CHILD'S PLAY 2

Directed by John Lafia. Universal Pictures, 11/90, 84 mins. With Alex Vincent, Christine Elise, Jenny Agutter, Gerrit Graham.

This is a run-of-the-mill sequel, interchangeable with all those HALLOWEEN and FRIDAY THE 13TH installments, except this time the killer is a doll. To be sure, Chucky is a state-of-the-art animatronic wonder, with full credit to Kevin Yagher, but he's still as much of a drag as all those other faceless slashers. And Chucky loses a lot of

impact in sharing so many scenes with his young victim, Alex Vincent, who seems more bored than frightened. From the looks of the setting at the film's toy factory climax, merchandising is about to foist a host of Chucky dolls on us. Hopefully impressionable youngsters won't be exposed to this R-rated irresponsible waste of time, which shows how easy it is to kill someone with a plastic bag over their head, and could plant the idea of brandishing an electric kitchen carving knife.

• Judith P. Harris

DEATH SPA

Directed by Michael Fishca. MPI Home Video, 11/90, 87 mins. With: William Bumiller, Brenda Bakke, Merritt Butrick.

A routine body-count film, set in a computer-controlled health spa (i.e. lots of chances to show semi-clad females). The lonely and vengeful ghost wife of the spa's owner possesses her twin brother's body in an attempt to drive her husband to suicide. But he's got a new live girlfriend and isn't interested—in the meantime, however, a lot of innocent bystanders get killed. The "unrated" version reviewed presumably contains additional gore not in the "R" version, but the effects aren't that special: mostly exploding and/or melting heads, stabbings, and so on. Even with the shower room scenes, it's actually kind of boring.

• David Wilt

EDWARD SCISSORHANDS

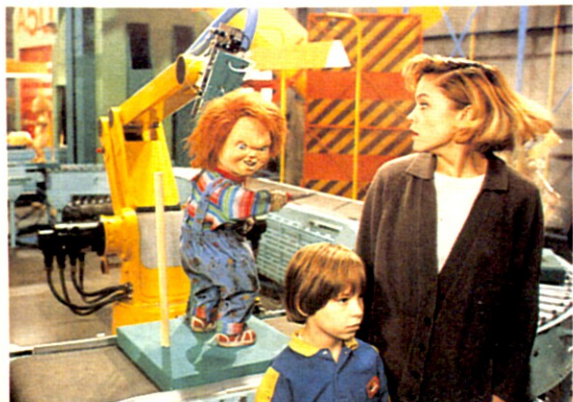
Directed by Tim Burton. 20th-Century Fox, 11/90, 105 mins. With: Johnny Depp, Diane Weist, Winona Ryder, Alan Arkin.

Johnny Depp submerges himself in the role of Edward Scissorhands, an artificial boy whose creator, fittingly played with charm by Vincent Price, died before replacing his scissorhands with "real" ones. The character has the poignance and appeal of L. Frank Baum's best creation, a tribute to director Burton's success. Like most Burton movies, the imaginative visuals and off-the-wall gags are affixed to a loose and sometimes limp structure, but Burton has now proved himself a consistent artist with real vision with this fable of the artist—sculptor and hairdresser Edward—as the eternal outsider and odd-fish in society.

•• Dennis Fischer

EVE OF DESTRUCTION

Directed by Duncan Gibbins. Orion Pictures, 11/90, 90 mins. With: Gregory Hines, Renee Soutendijk, Kevin McCarthy.



Alex Vincent gets bored again by Chucky in **CHILD'S PLAY 2**.

Here's a realistic situation: the Army has developed an anatomically correct, combat-trained and nuclear-armed robot, and sends it on test runs into the heart of San Francisco. Worse, once its escort is killed during a bank robbery and the robot itself is wounded, all of the inventor's repressed sexuality and latent guilt rises uncontrolled to the runaway droid's surface. Most incredible of all: director/writer Duncan Gibbons and collaborator Yale Udoff actually think they can pull off this premise with a straight face. As the Army's top counter-insurgency expert, Gregory Hines scrunches into helicopter seats and looks very embarrassed. In the dual role of rampant robot Eve and its inventor, Dutch actress Renee Soutendijk looks like a woman who deserves far better. Bonus points for SDI and Middle East references so screwy that they seem to come not just from another era, but from another planet.

o Dan Persons

FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND

Directed by Roger Corman. 20th Century Fox, 10/90, 85 mins. With: John Hurt, Raul Julia, Bridget Fonda, Nick Brimble.

This cerebral adaptation of Brian Aldiss' novel marks the triumphant return of director Roger Corman to the horror genre, a nicely adult melding of **BACK TO THE FUTURE**'s time travel dynamics with **HAUNTED SUMMER**'s gothic romance. But what really suffuses the picture is the tragic spirit of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, a book whose classic terror springs from man's pretensions of godhood. Corman's 21st century inventor (John Hurt) has just such illusions shattered when his weapons experiment gone awry warps him back to 1817 Vienna for a face-to-face encounter with Frankenstein (Raul Julia).

Corman spends as much time on the inventor's impro-

bable affair with Mary Shelley (a radiant Bridget Fonda) as on his pursuit of Frankenstein. Corman loads the film with metaphysical conversations on the nature of life and Hurt and Julia's robust performances provide the perfect contrast that reveals the immorality at the core of their misguided experiments. Nick Brimble is memorable as the monster, neatly festooned in the bulging prosthetics of makeup artist Nick Dudman (**BATMAN**). Beautifully shot in Italy, Corman's refined sense of direction gives the dark proceedings an atmosphere of chilling suspense and historical irony. It's the most exciting thing to happen to Shelley's legend in years. Unfortunately, the mad doctors at distributor 20th Century Fox dumped Corman's deserving effort, leaving it to video viewers to scream, "It's alive!"

o o o Daniel Schweiger

IT

Directed by Tommy Lee Wallace. ABC-TV, 11/18 & 11/20/90, 240 mins. With: Richard Thomas, John Ritter, Annette O'Toole, Tim Reid, Harry Anderson.

Directed by Tommy Lee Wallace (**HALLOWEEN III: SEASON OF THE WITCH**), this adaptation of Stephen King's 1986 novel is half of a good miniseries, chronicling the story of seven friends who reunite 30 years after a childhood encounter with an evil force that appears to them as a circus clown. With some tightening, it might have been an effective three-hour movie; instead, it's an overlong dramatization of an overwritten book. The set-up is terrific. It's creepy enough to make you think the production will escape the dreary fate of so many King dramatizations. The concluding chapter, however, turns choppy and, at times, downright silly. Although individual scenes are quite scary, the second half lacks focus, consistency and polish.

The last hour, the payoff, is an absolute cheat—a predictable string of run-of-the-mill horror clichés. And when the monster takes its "scariest" form, it looks like something out of a low-budget '50s shocker like **ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS**.

o Mark Dawidziak

MISERY

Directed by Rob Reiner. Columbia, 11/90, 107 mins. With: James Caan, Kathy Bates, Richard Farnsworth, Frances Sternhagen.

Another fine adaptation (and among the hallowed few) of Stephen King's work, from the folks who brought you **STAND BY ME**. James Caan is effective as the romance writer held prisoner by a psychotic fan (newcomer Kathy Bates in a splendidly creepy performance). Reiner's thoughtful, intelligent direction quickly moves you to the edge of your seat and keeps you there. A minor flaw: near the end, Reiner apparently couldn't resist the hackneyed device of having his boogeywoman come back from the (apparent) dead for one last shot at the hero. Otherwise, it's terrific.

o o o Dan Perez

MR. FROST

Directed by Philip Setbon. Triumph, 11/90, 104 mins. With: Jeff Goldblum, Alan Bates, Kathy Baker.

Criminal investigator Alan Bates arrests serial killer Jeff Goldblum, who, confined to a mental institution, proves that the power of darkness is superior to science by convincing atheistic psychiatrist Kathy Baker that he is the Devil. Similar to the **EXORCIST III**, director Philip Setbon's subtle, haunting thriller emerges as a darkly pessimistic alternative, portraying the Failure of Reason, rather than the Triumph of Faith, in the face of absolute Evil. The film's denouement is thematically logical, but not dramatically satisfying, lacking the catharsis of Blatty's film. This is, nevertheless, a

stylish, thoughtful gem, more effective than a dozen slash fests, and well worth a look when it turns up on video.

o o Steve Biodrowski

THE NUTCRACKER PRINCE

Directed by Paul Schibli. Warner Bros., 11/90, 80 mins. Animated. Voices: Kiefer Sutherland, Megan Follows, Peter Boretski, Peter O'Toole.

This jerkily animated Canadian film based on E.T.A. Hoffman's "The Nutcracker and the Mouseking" is a real snoozer for the juvenile set, lacking in wit, humor, pace, structure, and character. Young Clara gets caught up in Uncle Droselmeier's elaborate fantasy about a prince turned into a nutcracker by magical mice who seek to turn him into kindling, and soon can't distinguish between fact and fancy. Even Tchaikovsky's ballet score and star voices can't save this charmless effort.

o Dennis K. Fischer

PREDATOR 2

Directed by Stephen Hopkins. 20th Century Fox, 11/90, 108 mins. With: Danny Glover, Gary Busey, Ruben Blades, Maria Conchita Alonso.

No, it doesn't make much sense that, after tackling so choice a bit of beef as Arnold Schwarzenegger, alien sportsmen would decide to pick on Danny Glover's somewhat renegade but mostly workaday, near-future L.A. cop. The set-up though, does allow screenwriters Jim and John Thomas (who also scripted the first **PREDATOR**) and director Stephen Hopkins to expand upon and satirize the original's two third world themes. Columbian and Jamaican drug dealers wage turf wars in the streets, the "Company" skulks about, staging covert operations in, of all places, a meat-packing plant, and the Predator, when not offing people who sport dreadlocks nearly as impressive as his own, repairs to a magnificent, neo-Mayan spaceship (complete with trophy



Elvis Lives! Seen as one of the bodies plundered for organs in the sick **BLOOD SALVAGE**.

room boasting not only the skulls of humans but that of ALIEN's alien—this hunter's one uuuuuugly muthahfuckah). Wittier and slightly less reactionary than the first, with strange, grainy photography by Peter Levy.

o o Dan Persons

THE RESCUERS DOWN UNDER

Directed by Hendel Butoy and Mike Gabriel. Disney, 11/90, 110 mins. Voices: Bob Newhart, Eva Gabor, John Candy, Tristan Rogers.

Disney's latest cartoon feature may lack the classic stature of **FANTASIA** or **BAMBI**, but its Rescue Aid Society provides a convenient springboard for the further adventures of Bernard and Miss Bianchi, mice who, this time, come to the aid of a young boy threatened by an evil poacher in Australia. Unlike many sequels, which merely rehash their inspiration, this gives strong emphasis to new story elements, and could almost have stood on its own as a completely original film. Though it fails to transcend the animation format to appeal to adults as well as children, the film nevertheless features some vivid, innovative animation that adds a touch of distinction to its adequate adventure tale. The film's illusion of depth is often amazing, with clearly separated foreground and background elements, rack focus effects, and elaborate camera movements, techniques that show Disney's endeavoring to create animation with a contemporary live-action look.

o o Steve Biodrowski

Robot Renee Soutendijk goes to town in **EVE OF DESTRUCTION**.



REVIEWS

Exposes the primal psyche from which all superheroes emerge

DARKMAN

A Universal Pictures release. 8/90, 96 mins. In Dolby & color. Director, Sam Raimi. Producer, Robert Tapert. Director of photography, Bill Pope. Editor, David Stiven. Production designer, Randy Ser. Art director, Phil Dagort. Special visual effects, Introvision Systems International, Inc. Visual effects miniature sequences, 4-Ward Productions. Optical effects, VCE/Peter Kuran. Makeup effects, Tony Gardner & Scott Smith. Set designers, George Subayda & Ginni Barr. Costume designer, Grania Preston. Music, Danny Elfman. Sound, Terry Rodman. Stunt coordinator, Chris Doyle. Screenplay by Sam Raimi, Ivan Raimi, Daniel Goldin & Joshua Goldin, based on a story by Sam Raimi.

Peyton Westlake/Darkman Liam Neeson
Julie Hastings Frances McDormand
Louis Strack Jr. Colin Fries
Robert G. Durant Larry Drake
Yakutito Nelson Mashita

by Daniel Schweiger

Since Superman's appearance in 1939, America has become used to the stone-faced superhero. Garbed in colorful spandex, this paragon of justice would use fantastic powers and a computer-like mind to fight evil, never doubting the vigilante methods employed. Now Sam Raimi's **DARKMAN** exposes the primal psyche from which most heroes emerge, brilliantly destroying our pop culture's valiant preconceptions. Here's a freak who's just as black-hearted as the villains he pursues, desperately trying to regain his humanity and failing.

While **DARKMAN** might fulfill a comic book movie's slambang expectations, it's adventure plunges further into dementia with every exploit. And the picture goes mad with him, overloading the senses with helter-skelter technique, its Danny Elfman score blasting away like some mad overture. The directorial pyrotechnics and gleeful depravities are trademarks of Raimi, who's turned the violent slapstick of his **EVIL DEAD** films into an invigorating ride through superhero hell.

DARKMAN's anti-hero has as many roots in the 1920s' pulp as today's caped crusaders. Forebearers include the Shadow and the Spider, fiendish intellectuals who donned black fedoras and trenchcoats to battle criminals, often killing their foes with bizarre scientific inventions. **DARKMAN**'s motif is liquid skin, invented by the kindly Dr. Peyton Westlake (Liam Neeson) to help burn victims fit back into



Liam Neeson as director Sam Raimi's scarred scientist, doomed to lurk in the shadows forever.

society. But it's Westlake who becomes the ultimate outcast, when he's beaten and horribly burned by thugs. With nerves severed by doctors to dull his agony, Westlake finds himself possessed of both a heightened physical strength and a terrifying bloodlust to strike back at those who wronged him. Made whole again with synthetic skin that lasts only minutes when exposed to light, Westlake is doomed to lurk forever in the shadows—as **Darkman**.

Given Raimi's gorehound status, **DARKMAN** could have become an orgy of blood and burned skin, but the movie's impact comes instead from the threat of what's never shown. Raimi delights in the film's extreme violence including snapped fingers and a truck-crushed head without ever taking them too far. Raimi toys with the graphic expectations of his fans while concentrating on giving **DARKMAN** an overpowering, palpably dark mood. With clouds roiling overhead and **Darkman** nestling between gargoyles, the disfigured Westlake seems to be a takeoff on the comic strip **Phantom**. But instead of playing like some ponderous gothic opera, Raimi effortlessly moves his film through a style-warp of film *noir*, melodrama, and grand-scale action, reinvigorating its genre clichés

through sheer dynamism. Every shot is staged to the max, with angles tilted to bizarre extremes, as test tube montages roll past, and matched cuts make for striking scene changes like the transition from Westlake's shattered lab to a graveyard. Even some cheesy effects shots help provide the film with a comic book surrealism. It bursts with the crazed energy Raimi has focused from hundreds of other films, yet Raimi does far more than impress with his cinematic repertoire. For the first time, the visual lunacy of the director's **EVIL DEAD** and **CRIME-WAVE** has a good story behind it, one that's told with unexpected pacing and suspense.

Structured as crime drama, romance, and superheroics, **DARKMAN** is best at setting up its premise. Having Westlake impersonate the hoods so they'll lethally turn against each other, Raimi exhibits a terrific sense of black comedy. When Westlake's **Darkman** takes on the lead hood's visage for a Chinatown drug deal, only to become trapped with his *doppelgänger* in a revolving door, Raimi's sly cross-cutting punctures the suspense for a hilarious payoff as the mobsters try to decide which thug to shoot.

DARKMAN is bursting with such climaxes, and Raimi's spastic energy often nudges the film into parody. But it's a fine line that

comic books specialize in walking, and **DARKMAN** is so hyped-up that it somehow becomes easy to accept Westlake rebuilding his lab from scratch, assuming the identity of his foes, or hanging from a speeding helicopter. Raimi uses his new-found studio millions with gusto. Even after staging one of the most incredible aerial chases in film history, Raimi still tries to top it with a construction-sight battle high-wire act. The movie's so out-of-breath by this point that its denouement fails to match its earlier city-bashing stuntwork, and Raimi wisely plays the scene for its psychological danger. The insults hurled at Westlake by his foes about **Darkman**'s grotesque appearance prove more damaging than machine gun rivets or thousand-foot falls.

Though **Darkman** triumphs against incredible odds, he always remains a victim. He's a queasy hero to root for, the prototypical square-jaw turned into a disgusting mass of toasted skin. Liam Neeson throws himself into the role with guttural force, giving **Darkman** tell-tale signs of madness. In the midst of experiments, the scientist is seen to burst into tears and trash his own lab. Neeson's sympathetic, heartfelt performance makes **Darkman** a tragic figure, a reluctant killer who cries "what have I become?" as dark skies thunder above him.

The last thing you'd expect from such a comic book epic is to be moved, but **DARKMAN** neatly accomplishes the feat with its abrupt mood swings from terrifying excitement to crushing heartbreak. There's a new, welcome maturity to Raimi's work in the film—the feeling that superheroes have to grow up, not to mention a director who's used to drowning his characters in flashy visuals. Though many of Raimi's plot elements get lost in the shuffle, he stuffs as much detail into the film's people as its frames. His grotesque villains are best at embodying the film's satire, a collection of bald pigs and gun-legged creeps so demented that they could only exist in a four-color universe. □

Makeup Designer Tony Gardner on DARKMAN

By Steve Blodrowski

For Sam Raimi's **DARKMAN**, makeup expert Tony Gardner supervised a crew of 33 to provide the various masks and makeup effects required for the title character to disguise himself as the foes he destroys. But Gardner's primary responsibility was the design of the hideously deformed countenance of the Darkman himself. Based on a one-paragraph description in the script, Gardner sculpted a skeletal bust with bony eye sockets and burned away lips, taking the concept much further than could ever be achieved with makeup on an actor's face.

"Sam's a real broad visual artist," said Gardner of Raimi. "When I did the first sculpture, the prototype, I took it to what I thought was an extreme. Then I looked at it and said, 'I think I know what Sam's going to want,' and I just went nuts, pulling skin away from the chin and off the sides of the head, so that it was really almost violent, in a weird way. I took it into Sam, and he said, 'Great, this is exactly right!'"

Gardner then had to struggle with the task of adapting his design to the less than ideal features (for makeup purposes, that is) of Liam Neeson. "It was

Neeson models Gardner's burned hand design, part of a grueling 3½ hour stint spent in the makeup chair.



an angular design, very skeletal, and we needed somebody with a thin face and nose," Gardner explained. "Sam showed me a bunch of people he was looking at to play the Darkman, including Liam Neeson. He had a head that was square and a nose that had been broken three times because he used to be a boxer. I said, 'Out of all these people, he's probably the worst choice in regards to makeup.'"

Raimi cast Neeson anyway, and let Gardner grapple with his makeup dilemma. "I just sat there and looked at his head cast for hours and hours, trying to incorporate my design onto his features," said Gardner. "It's weird: what I thought originally were going to be big drawbacks actually proved to be assets, because we could use those features to make him identifiable beneath the makeup [as other characters]."

The Darkman required Neeson's head to be entirely covered with appliances so that Gardner could give the impression of skin burned away to reveal bone. "He was completely covered in this steam-sauna headgear, with one little hole for ventilation," said Gardner. "Even the part of his face that emerged as normal skin was an appliance. The only part of Liam that showed was the top one-third of his left ear."

The appliances expanded the apparent size of Neeson's head, allowing Gardner to carve the necessary holes and gouges. "If you're going to build the whole head up so that you can carve down into one half, the head's going to look big," said Gardner. "We scaled everything up as uniformly as possible, one-half inch, so that it wouldn't look like Mr. Potato Head. It worked, I'd say, ninety percent. I think it's a little too thick on one side, because when Liam wrinkles his face, it doesn't give the way it should. Liam has a lot of character lines, but with the foam, he has about three character lines, and they're very shallow. I think that's the only negative."

Gardner found himself broadening the look of the makeup to match Raimi's extreme visual style. "In doing the color scheme—which was [producer] Rob Tapert's biggest fear—we started out subtle and realistic,



Gardner (left), makeup supervisor, and assistant Chet Zar, pose with Neeson wearing Darkman's full prosthetics—only the top of Neeson's ear is really his.

by the book; but the broadness of the script made it obvious, after we'd done our first test on Liam, that we needed to go further," said Gardner. "We got more 'Sam Raimi' with it. We went for the burned-pizza look, where you have that crispy stuff around the edges that cracks off if you push it with your finger. I mixed sand, glue, and black paint together to give it lots of texture."

Neeson's reaction to being trapped in the makeup chair by Gardner and his assistant Chet Zar was somewhat different from that of most actors, who are often understandably perturbed about having their faces covered in prosthetics. "He didn't look at it like it would cripple him," said Gardner. "He looked at it as a challenge. He had this positive attitude the whole time. We'd call him at 3:30 in the morning, to be ready to shoot at 7:00, and he'd sit there patiently, then wear it for twelve hours, and require almost no maintenance. He was really aware of the makeup. If anything felt weird, he'd turn to us and ask if we wanted to touch up. We don't usually get that."

"We'd take that thing off at the end of the day, and you could wring the sweat out of it. He'd be content eating sunflower seeds and garbage like that—which amazed me. We had straws and

protein shakes for him, but he'd say, 'No, no—bran muffins and tea.' At the food table, he'd grab a handful of nuts, tip his head back and open his mouth, and whatever fell through those teeth he'd eat. Or else he'd take a bran muffin, pound it out flat, and roll it up like a worm."

Neeson's eating habits did cause a problem while filming the climactic battle scene. "His chin kept coming loose every forty minutes. After redoing it four or five times, at the end of the day we took the chin off and looked inside it. He had eaten sunflower seeds earlier, and three were three of them in there! We had been gluing this thing to his face at only three points—the sunflower seeds—and that was it!"

Gardner found both advantages and disadvantages working for the first time on a character makeup applied to a lead actor, rather than on makeup special effects like **THE BLOB**, his normal forte. "The first time Liam walked out on set, everyone scrutinized him, and we were respected and revered," said Gardner. "It was as if everyone wondered, 'Will the film work? We'll find out when Tony and Liam come out.' It was a serious feat, but as time progressed it became no big deal. But the first day was exciting." □

Tom Savini superbly reinterprets the George Romero classic

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

A Columbia release of a 21st Century Film and George Romero presentation of a Menahem Golan production. 10/90, 89 mins. In color. Director, Tom Savini. Producers, John A. Russo & Russ Streiner. Executive producers, Menahem Golan, George Romero. Director of photography, Frank Prinzi. Editor, Tom Dubensky. Art director, James Feng. Special makeup effects, John Vulich & Everett Burrell. Set designer, Brian J. Stonestreet. Costume designer, Barbara Anderson. Music, Paul McCollough. Sound, Thomas Pettinato. Production manager, Mark S. Fischer. Associate producer, Christine Romero. Screenplay by Romero, based on Russo and Romero's 1968 screenplay.

Ben Tony Todd
 Barbara Patricia Tallman
 Harry Tom Towles
 Helen McKee Anderson
 Tom William Butler
 Judy Rose Katie Finneran
 Johnnie Bill Moseley
 Sarah Heather Mazur

by Dan Perez

Remaking a classic film is almost invariably a financial decision, rather than a creative one. It's a safer bet financially, but the promise for disaster or mediocrity looms large especially when a film is both a popular and critical success. But, as with recent examples like David Cronenberg's *THE FLY* and Steven Spielberg's *ALWAYS*, sometimes a remake can beat the odds and achieve creative success as well. This is the case with Tom Savini's color version of George Romero's cult classic *NIGHT OF THE LIVING*



Patricia Tallman as Barbara, a survivor who leaves the supposed safety of the house.

DEAD.

Of Romero's zombie trilogy, including *DAWN OF THE DEAD* and *DAY OF THE DEAD*, the original *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*, influenced by Richard Matheson's novel *I Am Legend* and filmed on a shoestring budget in the turbulent '60s, still packs the strongest horror wallop. Romero's decision to let long-time makeup collaborator Tom Savini turn director on the remake proves to be a good one. Savini cut his

teeth directing episodes of Romero's *TALES OF THE DARKSIDE* television series and establishes himself as a major genre talent in his feature film debut.

The early scenes in the remake are almost supernaturally faithful to the original, beginning with Johnny (Bill Moseley) needling Barbara (Patricia Tallman) as they visit their mother's grave in a rural cemetery. When Barbara takes refuge from the *Living Dead* at an abandoned farmhouse,

Romero, as screenwriter, and Savini, begin toying with the characters, relationships and sensibilities of the original film.

In the first film, Barbara was either hysterical or near-catastrophic from fright, and Savini teases us with this possibility in the remake. But once Barbara regains her composure after the shock of the initial zombie attacks, she becomes cool, rational and logical—even more so than Ben, which sets up an intriguing tension between the two characters that is sustained through much of the rest of the film. What Romero did for blacks by setting Ben up as the hero in the original (without any fanfare), he does for women in the remake. Further, by making Barbara a dominant, more vital character, Romero

ups the ante in the volatile power struggle which escalates between differing factions in the house as they desperately try to deal with the crisis.

Surprisingly, Savini's approach to the film's special effects work is restrained. There are some good bits (a zombie whose burial half-slip slips down to reveal autopsy scars), but the director places more emphasis on suggesting gore rather than showing it, perhaps

Actor Bill Moseley, Aiming for a Horror Film Grand Slam

By Dann Gire

Johnnie, the kiddie who does a Boris Karloff imitation and becomes the ghoul's first victim in *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*, is played by Bill Moseley, the Barrington, Illinois actor who made a splash as the zany Platehead in Tobe Hooper's *TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 2*, wearing makeup by Tom Savini. When Savini turned director, he called on Moseley.

"He sent the script and told me, 'Pick a character,'" recalled Moseley. "It represented the first time anyone has actually hired me on the basis of previous work experience. I had to forego the dubious pleasure of auditioning.

"My first choice was to play Harry, the weaselly bad guy who gives everyone a hard time while they're trapped in the house," Moseley said. "I chose him because I wanted to be

employed for as many weeks as possible. Harry was about six or seven weeks worth of work compared to Johnnie's one or two. But when I told Savini about Harry, he said, 'Well, I actually saw you more as Johnnie.' So I had to be satisfied with one of the great small roles in horror history."

In the original film, Johnnie comes back as a ghoul to attack his sister Barbara, an idea dropped by the remake. "I don't think they wanted to bring me back because of my salary," said Moseley. "You do see Johnnie again at the end of the movie, but it's the dummy Johnnie they made out of foam rubber and pipe cleaners." The life-like dummy was used for Moseley's death scene at the beginning.

Nevertheless, Moseley, an avid horror film fan, was delighted to be a part of remaking one of his top four favorites in the genre. His other all-time

greatest picks include *THE BLOB*, *THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE* and *THE EVIL DEAD*. In addition to his key role in *THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 2*, Moseley had a bit part in the 1988 remake of *THE BLOB*, as soldier No. 2. It may not be the same as being in the originals, but it's the next best thing.

"Right now, my sights are set on being in *EVIL DEAD III*, which will be filmed sometime next year," Moseley said. "If that could happen, it'd be like making the grand slam of horror. Just to be a part of the remakes is really exciting."

Moseley said he "did lunch" with Sam Raimi, director of *DARKMAN* and *THE EVIL DEAD* movies to discuss his dream, but so far there's no word if he'll be appearing in the last of the remakes and sequels that would make his own horror hit parade come true. □



Moseley, as Johnnie, coming to the aid of besieged sister Pat Tallman.

out of deference to X-rated sequels *DAWN OF THE DEAD* and *DAY OF THE DEAD*, both of which featured some astonishing, stylishly gruesome scenes. Savini's carefully-tailored understatement lends much to the compelling nature of the remake: without the distraction of spectacular gore effects, the film's more subtle characteristics—narrative tension, characterization and dialogue—are showcased.

Romero and Savini do stumble occasionally. The line "They are us," used in reference to the zombies, was powerful when employed in the earlier films, but sounds hackneyed here. Savini's tendency to emulate the original movie, which proves to be a strength initially, sometimes seems slavish and unnecessary as the film progresses.

But these are minor cavils. There's a lot here to like. After a gripping, effective sequence in which open warfare breaks out among the occupants of the besieged farmhouse, Barbara leaves to take her chances out in the open among the zombies. The original *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* has been deservedly praised for turning many horror movie conventions inside out. By having Barbara leave the supposed safety of the house, Savini shatters the isolationist notions of countless horror movies ("Stay indoors; keep away from the monsters") in a brilliant stroke which not only transcends the original film but effectively foreshadows similar themes in *DAWN* and *DAY OF THE DEAD*. Savini also adds a coda to the remake which blends it seamlessly into the world portrayed in Romero's sequels. As good ol' boys slurp beer and "torture" zombies, a private helicopter flies over the scene, echoing similar sequences to come.

A surprising strength of the remake is Savini's attention to the performances. Patricia Tallman (featured in Romero's *KNIGHT-RIDERS*) is the standout as Barbara, but Tony Todd holds his own quite well as Ben, who is still very much a tragic hero. Tom Towles is appropriately slimy as Harry, and McKee Anderson is effective as his wife Helen.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is a superb remake, well worth seeing, particularly if you're a fan of Romero's zombie trilogy. Whether it ever supplants the original remains to be seen, but it's certainly an admirable debut for Savini, and a worthy entry in the genre. □

The Brave New World of Makeup for NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

By Michael Frasher

In charge of the highly realistic but low-key makeup effects for *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* were John Vulich and Everett Burrell, Pittsburgh proteges of makeup artist-turned-director Tom Savini, who have established their own L.A. based company, Optic Nerve. The duo is currently handling the makeup chores for George Romero's Stephen King adaptation, *THE DARK HALF*, now filming in Pittsburgh.

One of the most interesting aspects of Vulich and Burrell's makeup work on *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* was their use of an Amiga computer during the film's design phase. By digitizing faces with the use of a video camera, design changes on the Amiga could be rendered more quickly and easily than with handmade drawings [see 21:3:23].

Though it's unusual to find computers put to use at such a hands-on craft like makeup, Vulich predicts the role of the computer will become a paramount one. "At this point, computer use for effects is really in the early stages," he said. "But eventually computers will dominate the field and some types of physical effects such as those using gelatin, and latex will become rare. Even when these types of effects are used, computers will be a part of the process.

"For example, there are systems now in use in which a computer controls a laser cutting tool to shape latex blanks. A life cast is taken of an actor's face. The cast is scanned and the image is converted to digital informa-

tion. The computer employs the digital information to guide a laser cutting tool that creates a perfectly proportioned miniature for a stop-motion puppet."

Warming to the role of prognosticator, Vulich continued, "When physical effects are used they'll consist mainly of robotics and mechanicals controlled by computers," he said. "These types of systems are now becoming more and more common. Sensors attached to a person's face or limbs record movements. The movement information is stored as digital data and used by the computer to control the servos and hydraulics that operate a mechanical. Using these systems, complex movements are perfected and recreated flawlessly time after time to produce mechanical motion rivaling the fluidity of human movement. The same types of systems can be used to generate moving computer images."

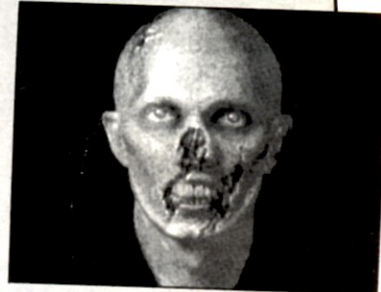
Vulich cited the water creature in *THE ABYSS* as an example of what the state of the art in computer-generated images was two years ago. "While the water creature was impeccably done it will one day seem crude when compared to hyper-realistic, computer generated, moving holographic images," said Vulich.

What this all means is that Bela Lugosi can be digitalized, recreated as a hologram, and trotted out to make *DRACULA II*. Purists will undoubtedly prefer recorded images of live actors while technorealists will swear there's nothing more realistic than a well done hologram.

All of this sounds like an

continued on page 61

Makeup supervisors Everett Burrell (l) and John Vulich at their Amiga computer design workstation. Right: Makeup options at the touch of a finger.

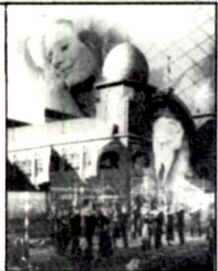


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TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

continued from page 5

is the music around them begins to take on a new character. It's based on the use of a synthesizer. With a synthesizer you can record certain sounds and play them back through the keyboard at different pitches and rhythms.

"What happens is that the people who are performing in this nightclub try to make the best of a bad situation and try to keep the music going. They're not sure exactly what is going on so they sort of integrate the sounds of the fight that's happening with the music they are rapping. It becomes something called 'Ninja Rap' [C-C-C-Cowabunga! Cowa-Cowabunga!] The Turtles start to get into it a little bit, with their movements and stuff, things that could reflect a little bit of the music. Otherwise, it could take us out of the reality." MTV reported that the white rapper Vanilla Ice went to North Carolina to shoot the sequence.

The rap song idea was Langen's invention. "I'm kind of happy about it because Golden Harvest and the director let me write the lyrics for the song," said Langen. "We'll see how much of it they use, but it was fun. It was a lot of fun."

But all of this could be for naught, if the Ninja Turtles fade into merchandising history before the release of the sequel. An August 1990 article in *The Wall Street Journal* reported, "Turtle products are multiplying so fast that some marketing experts believe the Turtles are on their way out already." Al Ries, a marketing consultant with Trout & Ries in Greenwich, Connecticut, noted, "The minute you overexpose a character, you kill it. And once you kill it, it will never come back. The owners of the Ninja Turtles are killing their pets by overexposing them."

Turtles marketer Freedman disputed that, noting the Turtles are more popular than ever. Freedman countered the charge of overexposure by revealing he had turned down many requests for licenses including Turtles fishing poles, vitamins, 900 numbers and condoms—condoms?

Langen said he felt the Turtles were here to stay, countering cynics who dismiss them as another merchandising monster with a television show and movies used simply as advertisement. "I think some people are going to be cynical regardless," said Langen. "It's the old thing that every generation has their crazy thing that the previous generation doesn't accept. I think it's true that the first movie and this movie *do* have something

for everyone because we try not to make it just for kids, like the Saturday morning cartoon. We try to include a few jokes that are clearly aimed at a more adult audience. It seems to go over really well with college students, too.

"That's the thing I would say to cynics, 'Give it a chance and enjoy the silliness!' I mean, the silliness is one of the points of it and if you can't get beyond the silliness, then you are not going to be able to enjoy it. Just the *name*, the entire foundation is based on ludicrousness. That's what inspired the guys, 'What is the most ludicrous, unsterotypical hero we can come up with?' You have to understand that was the origin of it. It was *meant* to be silly to a certain degree—I have to cover myself here otherwise Eastman and Laird will say, 'Not too silly.'"

It is important to note that such now unpopular fads as Masters of the Universe, Smurfs, Strawberry Shortcake and Holly Hobby all began as toys. The resulting television shows were merely by-products of the merchandising blitz designed to sell them. Noted Langen, "I think the Turtles can last because, unlike some of the other characters that have become big merchandising items, like the Transformers and the Masters of the Universe, the Turtles have *personality*. That's the one thing that sets them apart and makes them different." □

JACOB'S LADDER

continued from page 52

selves, a party where the dancing revellers become lewdly prancing devils before Jacob's strobe-blinded eyes; the ghastly descent into a hospital's dank underbelly, replete with piles of discarded limbs and hunks of raw meat: all play true to the palpable dread suffusing Rubin's script.

Indeed, it is not a matter of Lyne's betraying the script but of adjusting its emphasis, of turning it into "Adrian's variation on a theme" (Rubin's pithy description in a phone interview). The world which Lyne depicts from Jacob's perspective is harshly physical, an entropic urban landscape of pervasive destitution, madness, and isolating fear. The chief "demon" haunting its shrouded surface is social decay itself, the predominant blues and browns lending an air of chill and the grave to the city's terminal desolation. (It seems hardly coincidental that Lyne's art director Brian Morris also did Alan Parker's ANGEL HEART and PINK FLOYD: THE WALL, films charged with engulfing damnation.)

In Lyne's hands, JACOB'S LADDER emerges as a latter-day reminder of such '70s fare as THE PARALLAX VIEW and THREE DAYS OF THE CONDOR, paranoid thrillers wherein America turns unremittingly threatening in the wake of Watergate and Viet-

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nam, and the individual is doomed to silence or death. The difference, however, is that urban decay and the ubiquitous homeless now evoke the Reagan '80s, while the legacy of Vietnam tenaciously resists cinematic efforts (i.e. DePalma's CASUALTIES OF WAR, the present film) at laying it to rest. Of course, the gritty social emphasis is finally a red herring, about which it suffices to cite Ambrose Bierce's "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" as one of Rubin's inspirations. But even

viewers who guess the movie's ending will still derive much from this impressively moody psychodrama garbed in the Halloween costume of horror. For Rubin, the key to its meaning is offered by Danny Aiello's benevolent chiropractor, paraphrasing the German mystic Meister Eckert: "If you're frightened of dying and holding on, you'll see devils tearing your life away. But if you've made your peace, then the devils are really angels freeing you from the earth." For Lyne, on the other hand,

redemption is found on earth and Heaven is the home, that precarious refuge from a chaotic outside world, that place where a stairway can lead to bliss. Lovers of the fantasy genre may sorely regret the director's excisions of Rubin's most ambitious ideas, but must admit that JACOB'S LADDER retains a disturbing power. As Rubin put it with characteristic grace, "the film achieves its own harmony and balance," an observation that equally applies to the writer's stirring original. □

UPWORLD
 continued from page 13

with a poignant, heart-rending scene of Gnom and Hall overlooking Gnomeland, as the gnome leaves his human friend to return underground. Winston termed it the "big finale," but said that seeing it with an audience he discovered it was the wrong ending for his movie. "The tone was wrong," said Winston. "Audiences were having a great time. It was like the ending to a different movie." Winston said his new ending ties things up tighter and uses character humor to make the audience feel good and keep them laughing.

Despite Winston's new ending, Vestron was unable to find a buyer for the film, frustrating fans eager to view Winston's handiwork. The rights are now owned by Carolco/Live Entertainment, which purchased Vestron late last year. Scott Kroopf at Interscope Communications, the film's co-producer, said he now expects UPWORLD to reach movie theatres in the first half of 1991, possibly through New Line Cinema, hooked up as the theatrical distributor of Carolco/Live's video inventory. □

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NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

continued from page 59

agent's or director's idea of the perfect actor. Dead, digitized, infinitely programmable, and stored on a microchip. Better yet, once you buy that chip, you own the actor. There will be problems, of course. If audio sampling is a problem today, what's to prevent some future pirate in such a brave new cinematic world from sampling the holographic Lugosi and creating a bootleg Bela. □

LETTERS

THE SCRIPT, APPARENTLY, WAS BRILLIANT

I'm responding to Charles Leayman's review of GRAVEYARD SHIFT [21:4:50], specifically the accusations of "inept writing." Mr. Leayman, you did not read the screenplay, you saw an interpretation of it. Sometimes, when a character acts "ludicrously" in a film or appears to be "underwritten," it may have precious little to do with the ineptitude of the credited writer.

Directors, actors, editors, studio executives and a slew of others have far more "ideas" than screenwriters have rights.

John Esposito
Levittown, NY 11756

[Esposito should know, he's the screenwriter credited with GRAVEYARD SHIFT, his debut effort.]

WHO REWROTE HISTORY?

I have a few observations regarding Dan Scapperotti's article on the re-released BATMAN serial of 1943 [21:4:12], from which anti-Japanese attitudes of the times were removed. I personally don't like the rewriting of history, and I am quite able to watch Boris Karloff playing Fu Manchu as the product of a less enlightened era. But did it occur to Scapperotti that the BATMAN serial may have been modified because distributor Good Times Video knows that some Asian-American citizens feel very differently on the subject? Or does Scapperotti have proof that the changes were made because Columbia is now owned

by Japan's Sony? If so, why not say it?

Frankly, Japan-bashing doesn't belong in the pages of a magazine with a "sense of wonder."

Serge Mailloux
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

[Sensitivity isn't exactly the entertainment industry's strong suit. If Good Times made the changes, who do you think they might have been currying favor with?—Asian-Americans, demographically a miniscule audience segment, or Columbia's new owners, the grantor of their tape franchise?]

SHE DIDN'T DO IT

The small picture in the bottom-left corner of your Stephen King article "On Moviemaking with Dino DeLaurentiis" [21:4:41] is miscaptioned. It is *not* a picture of Dino DeLaurentiis and producer Martha Schumacher. Indeed, it is a picture of Dino and his daughter, Raffaella DeLaurentiis, who is a producer as well. The picture is from the set of DUNE. Ms. DeLaurentiis has never been involved with any of her father's "succession of King boxoffice flops."

Matthew Feitshans
Studio City, CA 91604
Warren, MI 48093

ALSO MISIDENTIFIED

The special effects artist pictured on page 23 of our Stephen King cover story [21:4] touching up a prop head of Kathy Bates from MISERY is Howard Berger, the B in KNB Effects, not his partner Greg Nicotero. We regret our errors, and apologize.

TERMINATOR 2

continued from page 33

with an obviously friendly Schwarzenegger Terminator riding in a car with Hamilton as Sarah, and the boy.

Patrick as Key 1000, according to a source close to the production, went up to ILM in San Rafael two weeks before production began last October 9 "to be lasered." Unable to find someone bigger or badder to oppose Schwarzenegger, Cameron saw Patrick as a diminutive presence, termed "a cross between David Bowie and James Dean" by a production source, who could believably hold his own against Schwarzenegger. Patrick reportedly won the role, after auditioning for Cameron, over Billy Idol, and has already been signed to reprise his role for the seemingly inevitable TERMINATOR 3. Ironically, Patrick was once the star of FUTURE HUNTERS (1985), a TERMINATOR rip-off produced by Cameron's Lightstorm partner Larry Kasanoff for Roger Corman, rated a "turkey" by Video Movie Guide.

The bulk of TERMINATOR 2 is set in the near future, filmed by Cameron on the streets of Fremont, near San Diego, in Long Beach where a car chase was staged on the freeway, and in Los Angeles, featuring the dark noir lighting of cinematographer Adam Greenberg, who filmed the original. Desert scenes were shot in Palmdale.

The Fremont shooting, as reported by the San Jose Mercury News, involved construction of a three-story high false front to the top of an office building in the

Warm Springs industrial area which was blown up in an elaborate stunt for a SWAT team sequence in which a motorcycle rider jumps through a second story window and grabs hold of a hovering helicopter that flies away. The building explosion was one originally designed to be filmed as a miniature effect in post-production, staged full scale by pyrotechnician Tommy Fischer at Cameron's insistence, who is said by a source on the production to be "going all out to get everything as real as possible in camera."

Nemec's sets of war-torn future Los Angeles are being built inside an abandoned glass factory converted to studio space in Saugus, California, north of Los Angeles near Magic Mountain, where much of CHILD'S PLAY 2 was shot. Cameron plans to continue the shooting on TERMINATOR 2 through mid-March, more than twice the shooting schedule of the first film, leaving little more than three months for the post-production work needed to finish the movie for its July 4th opening—about the same amount of time Cameron used to complete the less ambitious original.

How does Cameron, the perfectionist whose painstaking repeatedly delayed the release of his previous film, THE ABYSS, expect to meet such an exacting schedule? "Don't ask me!" quipped one Cameron co-worker who disdained the pressure-cooker atmosphere fostered by the director. "He won't," predicted another, who grudgingly admitted that the overtime spent in trying will be enough to afford him the downpayment on a new house. □

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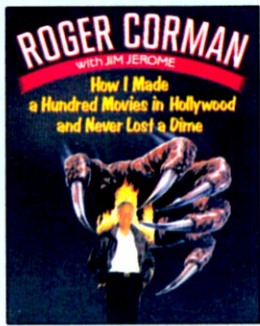
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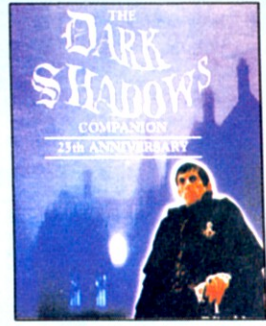
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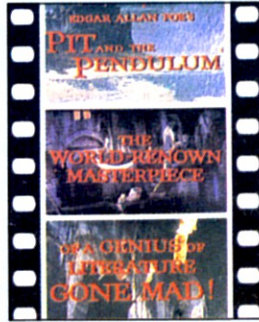
Reel Art
 In 1988 Stephen Rebello authored one of our most beloved cover stories entitled "Selling Nightmares: The Movie Poster Artists of the Fifties." Now Rebello (along with Richard Allen) follows-up this classic genre article by broadening his coverage to survey the entire field of films made during Hollywood's "golden age." This handsomely produced volume is clothbound, huge (10 1/4 x 13 1/4), 336 pages, with 325 illustrations (250 in full-color) and a signed bookplate.



The Dark Shadows Companion
 A 25th anniversary collection of photographs and behind-the-scenes stories. The book is edited by series star Kathryn Leigh Scott, and includes a forward by Jonathan Frid (vampire Barnabas Collins). Contributors include actors, writers, producers and directors of the original show. With rare color and b&w photos, synopsis of all 1,225 original episodes, and an introduction to the new NBC series. Hard & soft cover, a few signed bookplates available.



Vol. 21:2 Back Issue; Custom Reproduction
Back Issue: This back issue takes you behind-the-scenes of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION as it bravely goes where no other STAR TREK has gone before—into a new season. An overview of the development, obstacles, and success of the new version of the prime time classic. **Custom Reproduction:** A full-color 8 x 10 glossy photographic reproduction of artist David Voigt's dazzling cover painting of Cinefantastique Vol. 21:2 featuring members of the new TREK crew.



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 Some of the most innovative, artistic, and downright silly movie moments are often contained in the trailer used to hype them and here are great selections for collectors! Each trailer runs approximately one hour and features thematic groupings from genre films of the past. Horror/SF I, Horror/SF II, Horror/SF III, Horror/SF IV (Hammer Horror), Horror/SF V (Horrible Honeys), Horror/SF VI (Super Giants), Hitchcock Collection, and American International Pictures (AIP).



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Back Issue: This back issue takes you behind-the-scenes for the making of the new Dark Shadows TV series—slated for early 1991. Meet the new cast, hear from series creator Dan Curtis and his creative team, and review the history of the original show. **Custom Reproduction:** A full-color 8 x 10 glossy photographic reproduction of artist David Voigt's dazzling cover painting of Cinefantastique Vol. 21:3 featuring the Vampire Barnabas—both today and yesterday.

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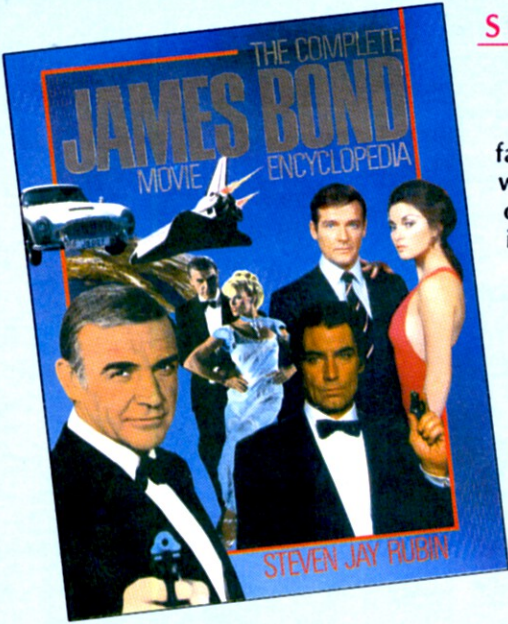
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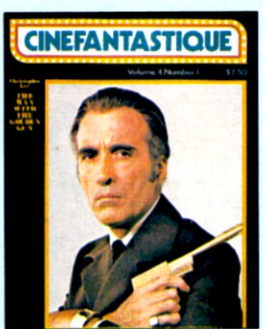
THE COMPLETE JAMES BOND MOVIE ENCYCLOPEDIA

Bond authority Steven Jay Rubin has compiled the most exhaustive, fact-filled, alphabetical compendium of Bond data ever published! Packed with hundreds of photographs, this informative guide includes thousands of entertaining movie facts and behind-the-scenes details as well as special itemized lists for each Bond film.

You'll learn interesting facts like—How Sean Connery was chosen by the British public to play 007 long before the producers even talked to him! And, you'll get answers to questions like—What are M's and Q's real names?; Who or what is "Little Nellie"?; and, How did Prince Philip assist in getting the name Pussy Galore past censors?

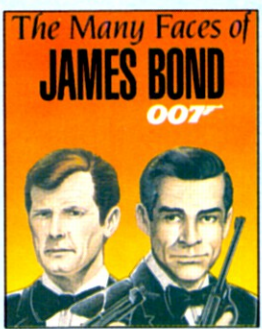
Plus, this book features all the trademarks of the Bond films—Maurice Binder's provocative opening credits, Bond's gizmos and gadgets, and numerous other bits of info for the well-versed fan! This 11½ x 8¾, 467-page book comes with an author-autographed bookplate—while they last!

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Cinefantastique Vol. 4 No. 1

Genre actor extraordinaire Christopher Lee speaks out in an extensive interview about his role in the Bond classic, MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN and moving beyond his famous characterization of DRACULA. This is one of our rare, early back issues which also features an in-depth article on the original NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD.



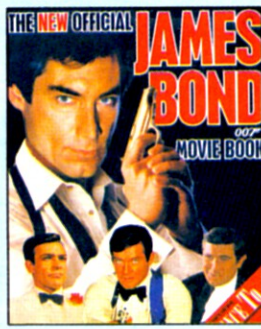
The Many Faces Of James Bond

This tape covers all six Bond actors (Connery, Moore, Dalton, Lazenby, Niven, and Nelson) in a tribute to the suave 007. You'll get a peek behind-the-scenes and learn the secrets used in making the James Bond films. Relive Bond's greatest moments with film clips and rare documentary footage; with a featurette on the making of THUNDERBALL.



James Bond: Casino Royale

This classic TV production of CASINO ROYALE stars Barry Nelson as the original James Bond. The 60-minute show is introduced by William Lundigan and co-stars famed character actor Peter Lorre, everybody's favorite villain, and the beautiful Linda Christian, who became the first in a lengthy string of glamorous Bond girls.



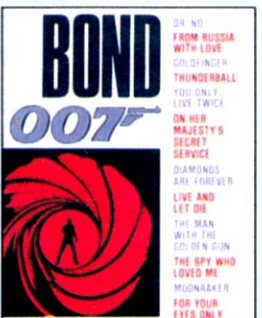
The New Official Bond Movie Book

The revised edition of this book which was originally published in 1987 marks the 25th anniversary of the James Bond film dominance that has taken the worldwide boxoffice by storm, and is a must for all fans of the screens most innovative hero. Contains countless facts and over 200 photos from the films. 8¼ x 11¼; hard and soft cover; 128 pages.



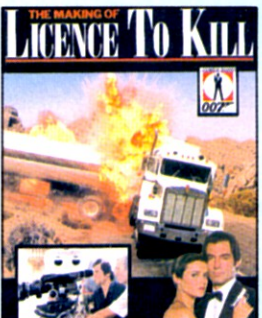
The James Bond Films

This rare second edition takes you on location and on the sound stages with a comprehensive look at the making of the 007 films (through 1983). Bond expert Steve Rubin's book is illustrated with fascinating behind-the-scenes photos. We have a limited number of copies available on a first-come first-served basis in both cloth and paper; 8½ x 11¼.



James Bond At The Movies

This compilation of trailers, featuring Sean Connery and Roger Moore, covers the Bond films from 1962-1985 including DR. NO, GOLDFINGER, DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER, LIVE AND LET DIE, THE SPY WHO LOVED ME, FOR YOUR EYES ONLY, and A VIEW TO A KILL. In color, the tape runs 45 mins. and features villains and Bond girls.



The Making of Licence To Kill

This "making of" book captures the excitement—and the hard work—of planning and shooting this latest film in Mexico and Florida, with a wealth of on-location stories and anecdotes. Includes a unique array of pictorial material: storyboards, production sketches, and 150 color, and 100 b&w photos. 8½ x 11¼; paper; 128 pages.



Cinefantastique Vol. 19 No. 5

This popular photo-filled back issue takes you behind-the-scenes for the filming of 1989's LICENCE TO KILL. Those interviewed include stars Timothy Dalton, Robert Davi, Desmond Llewellyn, and Carey Lowell, as well as writer Richard Maibaum. A complete Bond filmography traces the character's successful 27 year screen history.